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# Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk March 20, 2016

Mid edition No 704

## BUDGET

### £15m 'corridor' for driverless cars

Chancellor puts county at forefront of technology

## ENVIRONMENT

### Mast wars in countryside

How we could end up with two masts as tall as the Shard

## SCHOOLS

### Education pull-out supplement

From academies to secondary school places and extremism

## POLICE

# Barnes bids farewell

We look back at the rollercoaster time in office of our crime commissioner

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## Driverless cash boost is not as exciting as it seems

IF YOU believe the hype, then before long we'll all be jumping in our car, telling it where to go, putting our feet up, and admiring the view.

Because driverless technology, we're told, is just around the corner and Kent, it seems, is set to be at the forefront of our relentless pursuit of progress.

In the paperwork for this week's budget, chancellor George Osborne revealed £15million for a 'connected corridor' along the A2 and M2 linking London and Dover (see page 11 for more).

It all sounds very impressive, doesn't it? And that seems like an awful lot of money. But when trying to put the meat on the bones, there were an awful lot of blank faces this week from those you'd hope would know more. According to the Department of Transport, it is 'great news' for the county and a 'real benefit' to us all.



Editor **Chris Britcher**

Speak to Highways England, however, and they suggest it's more about being able to experiment and fine-tune the technology with the car manufacturers rather than anything more exciting. Extra lanes of smooth-running, driverless cars are not, they stress, just around the corner.

The ultimate outcome is likely to be somewhere inbetween.

Yes, it will be good because if all goes well, we can assume Kent will be among the first to benefit when fleets of cars with snoozing passengers start rolling out. Especially if it means

our European cousins can experience it when they travel here. Won't they be impressed?

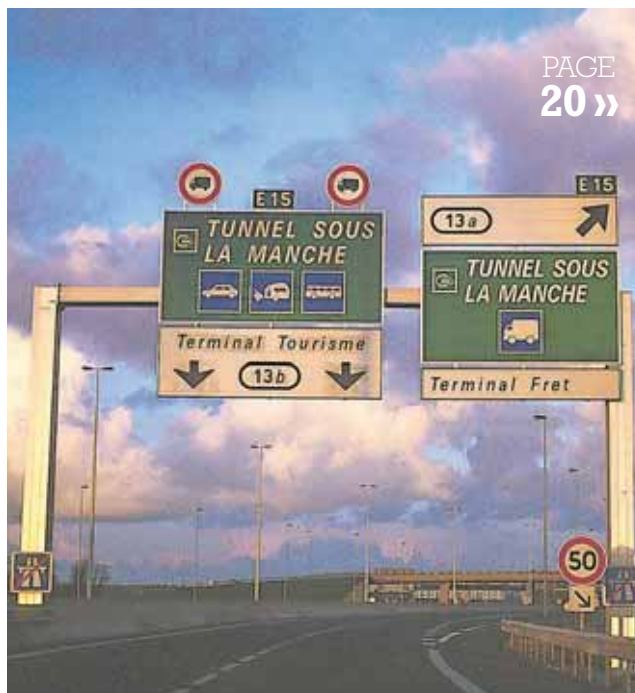
Just try not to think about all the money our councils have been told to save when you watch all those millions being splashed out on little wi-fi boxes being fitted along our roadsides over the coming months and years.

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




Published in Kent and printed by Archant Print, division of Archant Community Media Limited (Co Reg No 19300). Registered Office: Prospect House, Rouen Road, Norwich NR1 1RE

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## Shopping complex gets green light for expansion

By Tom Pyman

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TUNBRIDGE Wells shopping centre Royal Victoria Place has been granted planning permission for its £70million extension.

The go ahead from Tunbridge Wells Borough Council gives the green light to an additional 173,000 sq ft of retail, restaurant and leisure space. It includes a multiplex cinema - the first time the town centre will have a big screen since 2000.

Nicky Blanchard, centre manager, said: "We are delighted that our exciting plans for RVP have been given the green light by the council and would like to thank both our shoppers and members of the public for their enthusiasm and support.

"I am confident that this significant investment in Tunbridge Wells town will benefit not only RVP but the town centre as a whole and has the potential to act as a strong business catalyst attracting further investment throughout the town centre."

Chris Taylor, head of private markets at Hermes Investment



**PLANS:** Generated designs of how the expanded RVP will look when work is completed.

Management which owns RVP, said: "Achieving this planning consent represents both our and the local authority's strong commitment to enhancing the status of the town's retail and leisure offer. Already the region's dominant shopping destination, RVP will now further capitalise on the potential that its affluent catchment offers, and we are delighted with the result."

The plans were originally

revealed last year and a public exhibition outlining the proposals met with support from shoppers.

The council's planning committee had been recommended to grant permission following extensive research by the council into the proposals.

Enhancing RVP is seen as a key tool in ensuring the long-term health and vitality of the spa town's traditional retail centre, as it looks to ensure it remains a

popular shopping destination and prevent the curse suffered by so many other high streets when faced with the twin threats of online traders and the big out-of-town shopping complexes.

Anchor tenant in the scheme will be Fenwicks.

Work is expected to start next spring and take around two years.

The team behind the scheme say they hope it will be fully open by the spring of 2019.

## Major engineering set to disrupt Easter rail services across county

TRAVELLERS planning to use the train over the Easter weekend are being warned to check the timetable before they set out with 'significant' engineering work taking place across the county.

Network Rail, which maintains the rail infrastructure, will be working at a number of locations on improving tracks - but it will mean Southeastern services will be disrupted.

Work includes on-going work on tracks approaching London Bridge as part of the multi-billion pound Thameslink programme.

In addition re-signalling work in east Kent continues. It sees the replacement of several old signal boxes by a new regional centre at Gillingham.

Two additional platforms at Rochester will also come into use.

Travellers are also advised to be aware of work on the Crossrail project which will include a new station at Abbey Wood.

The long weekend will also see routine maintenance work carried out in various locations.

An amended timetable will operate throughout the four-day Easter weekend. On Good Friday, Saturday and Easter Monday, a Saturday service will be in place. A Sunday service will operate on Easter Day. However, early morning and late night services may also differ.

A spokesman explained: "Even if your route is not directly affected by work, the times of your trains may be different to usual. Revised Easter train and replacement bus times are available in all online journey planners.

"We advise all passengers to know how their journey is going to be affected and check before they travel."

Over Easter Network Rail will also be undertaking work at other locations around the national network with major alterations to services from Victoria, Waterloo, Paddington and Liverpool Street.

## Just what did kill mother and daughter in Gillingham?

INITIAL post-mortem examinations on the body of a mother and daughter found at their home in Gillingham on Monday have been unable to explain their deaths.

Lillian Oluk, 36, and the body of a young girl, were discovered at Trafalgar Street.

It is believed both may have been dead for more than a week before their bodies were discov-

ered. The alarm was raised when residents in the flats reported an unpleasant smell.

Next of kin have been located and an investigation into the circumstances surrounding their deaths is continuing. However, police say they are not treating the deaths as suspicious.

Anyone with information should contact Kent Police.

## PM vows to tackle pollution problems around Dartford

DAVID Cameron has insisted the issue of air pollution around the Dartford Crossing is being tackled.

Speaking at prime minister's questions on Wednesday, Thurrock MP Stephen Metcalfe said: "Before spending billions on a new crossing we should consider sorting out the problems at the existing crossing, not only helping a greater number of motorists, but

to improve illegal levels of poor air quality and bring more resilience to the M25 motorway network."

The PM responded: "We need to tackle congestion and air quality.

"Stationary traffic is more polluting than moving traffic and so sorting out the existing problems at Dartford is important but we need to look at the options for a new crossing."



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## Hospital cash boost to fund haemophilia study

THE Haemophilia Centre at the Kent and Canterbury Hospital has been awarded a £250,000 grant to lead a research 'first' into the condition.

Haemophilia is a rare inherited blood disorder which prevents the blood from clotting.

The cash is from the National Institute of Health Research. The study, beginning in April, will be the first

ever randomised clinical trial of its type for physiotherapy intervention in children with haemophilia. It will take the first steps towards establishing links between exercise, weak muscles and joint damage caused by bleeding in children with the condition.

The Haemophilia Centre treats more than 500 patients from across Kent.



**STANDING:** Gurvinder Sandher

## Fresh face in the race to be the next PCC

A LEADING figure in the administration of Kent Police has thrown his hat into the ring ahead of this May's police and crime commissioner election.

It comes in the week Ann Barnes confirmed she would not be seeking a second term (full story, see page 14).

Gurvinder Sandher, from Dartford, is the current county chair of the Kent Police independent advisory group and vice chair of the Kent Police and Crime Panel. He will stand on an independent ticket at the May 5 election.

The equality campaigner said: "I am standing as a genuine independent candidate, with no political party of special advisors behind me."

"Kent is very close to my heart and those who know me and my work are aware of my commitment to the county."

"I have acted as a critical friend to Kent Police in many different roles over 17 years."

"I passionately believe that there should be no party politics in policing and I will work very hard during the campaign to address the various issues that matter most to Kent communities and aim to deliver with action devoid of any political agenda."

The Liberal Democrats have confirmed Maidstone councillor Dave Naghi will be its candidate. It did not field anyone in the 2012 election.

## Ambulance chairman quits as chief executive put on 'leave of absence'

**By Tom Pyman**

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SOUTH East Coast Ambulance Service (Secamb) NHS Foundation Trust this week confirmed its chairman, Tony Thorne, has resigned after four-and-a-half years in the job.

It comes after the trust, which is responsible for emergency services in Kent, published an independent review into a controversial policy regarding 111 calls.

The pilot saw a delay before emergency NHS 111 calls were put through to the 999 number, meaning the service was able to meet its response time targets.

This review looked specifically at the decision-making processes and governance around the implementation of the pilot, rather than its impact on patients, which is subject to a separate, clinically-led independent review, due to be concluded by June 2016.

The trust acknowledges the way the pilot was governed was "inadequate" and insists that lessons will



**CHANGES:** New chair for Secamb

be learnt to avoid similar controversy in the future.

Now, Mr Thorne has resigned from his post after intense speculation that the regulatory body, Monitor, had asked him to step down last

month, which was denied.

A statement reveals that Mr Thorne had informed Monitor in December of his intention to resign once an interim chair – announced on Tuesday as Sir Peter Dixon – had been appointed.

The process of appointing a permanent chair will be agreed in line with legislation and the trust's constitution.

Meanwhile, Secamb chief executive Paul Sutton is currently taking mutually-agreed leave of absence, while the trust determines the appropriate actions to take.

A spokesperson for SECamb said: "The trust welcomes and accepts the findings of the review in full."

"It recognises that the governance surrounding the pilot was inadequate, and has already started to make serious changes to the way matters of governance are managed and dealt with to make sure lessons are learnt and a lapse in governance of this sort does not happen again."

"A joint recovery plan is being agreed with the trust's commissioners and Monitor to address concerns."

## Ramsgate emporium given expansion nod

BOSSES behind Ramsgate's vintage market, Petticoat Lane Emporium, have won a legal battle to expand the business into other areas of Kent.

The emporium appealed a planning enforcement notice issued by Thanet District Council and has now been given the green light to grow beyond its current Ramsgate base.

Describing itself as the biggest and best indoor extravaganza of vintage, retro, craft, art and antique merchandise, the emporium has only been open for little over a year, but its success is now allowing it to spread its wings further throughout the county.

Owner Kevin Shaw has identified a number of potential sites, including the former Lincoln Furniture Warehouse in Maidstone, but says a decision can't be rushed.

"It has to be the right site for us," he told KoS.

"The emporium is unique, there's nothing like it anywhere in Kent, and so we need a building that fits the ethos of what we're doing."

## Combined Ops show organiser changes

THE popular Combined Ops Military and Aviation Show will have new organisers from this year.

Headcorn Special Events will take over as sole organisers of the event which had previously been shared by the Invicta Military Preservation Society (IMPS).

The annual event is staged this summer at Headcorn Aerodrome across August 13 and 14 with air displays and a host of military attractions.

IMPS says it made the decision after struggling to find sufficient volunteers to devote the necessary time to form an organising team. However, it is hoped by bringing the event under one umbrella organisation it will make it more efficient and protect it going into the future.

A spokesman for the event's promoters said: "Whilst IMPS regrets having to withdraw from assisting with the organisation of the show, as the co-operation between the two organisations has been very close for over eight years and has delivered a very successful and popular attraction for the public, they feel this agreement will ensure the show's continued success."

## Did you see man in a onesie raid garage?

POLICE are appealing for witnesses to a crime in which a man in a onesie held up a petrol station in Maidstone and threatened staff with a knife.

Officers say the man was described as wearing a distinctive white onesie with black spots.

He entered the BP Parkwood service station on March 9 before grabbing money from a till. Details have only just been made public.

The incident happened after the suspect entered the Sutton Road premises at around 8pm. It is reported he shouted at staff to open a till. The man then reached across the counter and managed to open the till himself. It is alleged that he was seen to be holding a knife at the time.

A quantity of cash was stolen before the suspect then fled through an exit in the direction of Wallis Avenue.

A 24-year-old man from Maidstone has been arrested in connection with the incident and has been bailed pending further enquiries until April 6.

Anyone with information should contact the appeals line on 01622 604100.



# School approved as Corbyn mocks garden city's progress

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

THE first primary school to serve the proposed Ebbsfleet garden city has been given the green light this week - coinciding with a swipe from Jeremy Corbyn over the 15,000-home development's slow progress.

Able to cater for 420 pupils, permission was given at a meeting of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation.

It has been given planning powers to assist the progress of the ambitious scheme.

The school, and a new community centre, will be built in Castle Hill, and will also provide 26 nursery places as well as 15 for special needs pupils.

It will be called Cherry Orchard Primary and be run by the Leigh Academies Trust. If all goes to plan, it will open in September 2017.

It marks a significant move for the development which continues to promise much but, so far, actually deliver relatively little.

Paul Spooner, interim chief executive of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, added: "Development in the garden city is now moving forward at pace.

"Working with landowners, developers and utility companies we are accelerating the delivery of infrastructure and new housing.



**APPROVED:** The Cherry Orchard Primary will be run by the Leigh Academies Trust

"There are already 387 homes built with another two developers on site preparing to build 400 homes."

The announcement comes after Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn mocked the speed of developments on the site in the House of Commons on Wednesday in his response to George Osborne's budget.

Mr Corbyn told MPs: "We've heard promises of garden cities before.

"Two years ago, the chancellor pledged a garden city of 15,000 homes at Ebbsfleet.

"Since then, ministers have made 30 Ebbsfleet announcements but only built 368 homes.

"That's 12 homes for every press release. We need a vast increase in press releases to get any homes built in Ebbsfleet, or indeed anywhere else."

Last month, we reported how the garden city is being recognised as a 'healthy new town', which means planners will liaise with the NHS to help create communities promoting healthy lifestyle choices.

## Wi-fi extended to all of county's libraries

EVERY library across the county is now offering complimentary wi-fi for every visitor.

The expansion from the 33 libraries which currently offer it, to the full 99, was possible due to funding from Arts Council England.

The grant, is part of a nation-wide campaign to provide access for visitors using their laptop, smartphone or PC. KCC's Mike Hill said: "It is great especially for people living in rural areas."

## Warning over Easter Bluewater roadworks

THE coastbound A2 will be closed between the slip roads at Bean for Bluewater on Easter Sunday and Monday for essential resurfacing.

The closure will begin at around midnight on March 26 until around 10am on Monday, while Bluewater is closed and traffic flows reduced over the Easter weekend.

## Register for Big Ride

REGISTRATION for this year's Medway Big Ride is now open.

Taking place on June 19 at Medway park in Gillingham between noon and 4pm there will be a host of events, headlined by a mass family bike ride of a looping 4km course.

It forms part of the Medway Festival of Sport marking the 2016 Rio Olympic Games.

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# Victim suffered 'an horrific ordeal' as rapist is given life

A 53-year-old from London who raped a woman at knifepoint in Gillingham has been sentenced to life in prison.

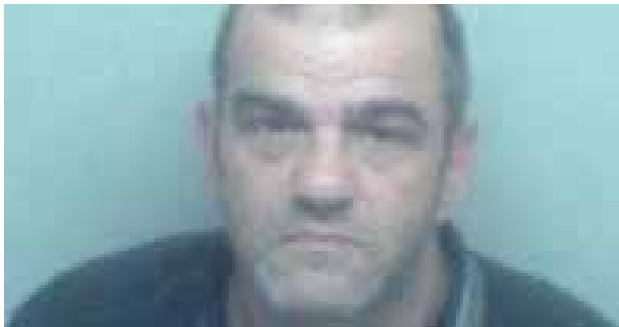
Philip Bradley, from Southwark, was found guilty of rape, attempted kidnap, making a threat to kill, having a bladed article, assault and damaging property.

He was sentenced at Maidstone Crown Court to life imprisonment, with a minimum of 12 years before he can be considered for parole.

Investigations by Kent Police found Bradley, who was known by his victim, unexpectedly visited her at home on July 10, last year.

He attacked her, holding a knife to her throat while he did so. On August 11, Bradley returned to the property and forced his way inside by removing a bathroom window.

He assaulted a friend who was at



the property and then threatened his victim with a knife again before leaving the scene.

Detective Constable Rebecca Saunders, said: "Bradley subjected his victim to a horrifying ordeal at

knifepoint and later returned to the scene to threaten her again.

"It is clear the courts recognised how much of a danger Bradley poses with this sentence of life imprisonment."

## Bridge trust offers groups grant cash opportunity

ORGANISATIONS across the county are being invited to apply for grants worth £200 to £25,000 from one of the country's oldest charities.

The Rochester Bridge Trust is offering the scheme, open for projects related to heritage structures, history and agriculture, the River Medway and civil engineering.

The trust, founded in 1399, owns and maintains the bridges over the Medway at Rochester and derives its income from 14th and 15th century endowments.

Bridge clerk Sue Threader explained: "The trust's main purpose is to provide crossings of the River Medway, however, when funds allow our trustees are able to offer a range of grants."

"We particularly welcome applications to fund well-planned projects from sound and well-governed organisations."

"In the past, these have ranged from supporting a primary school's construction club to providing funds towards Medway Aircraft Preservation Society's ongoing restoration of the Short Scion floatplane."

Applications are welcome from across the county.

Round one applications should be received by 5pm on April 12. Two further rounds will then close in July and October.

For information and full details on the criteria for applying for a grant, visit the website [www.rbt.org.uk/grants](http://www.rbt.org.uk/grants).

It includes case studies of previous successful bids.

## Kent Life award boost

TOURIST attraction Kent Life Heritage Farm Park has been highly commended in the education category of the National Farm Attractions Network annual awards.

It was the third time the venue, near Maidstone, has secured the honour in the national awards.

## Gas works on the A28

MOTORISTS using the A28 Canterbury Road in Ashford are being advised to expect delays from Sunday night as gas main replacement works get under way.

Temporary lights will be in place at the junction with Faversham Road. The works are expected to be completed by July 8.

## Green spaces appeal

SWALE Borough Council says it wants to hear from residents to nominate local green spaces for special protection.

It says criteria can include recreational value, importance to local wildlife, beauty, cultural or heritage significance. It comes as the council finalises its local plan.

## Festival's headliners

TOP-SELLING band The Christians and The Blockheads have been confirmed as headliners for the first Dover Music Festival taking place this summer.

The event takes place on July 23 at the Dover Cruise Terminal and will be free to attend along with the community regatta.



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## Top Three Stories



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Easter services could be affected

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Woodland Trust issues crossing warning

### 3. Takeaway blaze

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## The Essential Guide:



## ...to the Dartford Crossing

Everything you need to know about the Dart Charge.



**FEATURED PHOTO GALLERY:** A Folkestone based Gurkha regiment has been training in Norfolk ahead of an eight-month tour of Afghanistan, which begins in April. Photos: Corporal Andy Reddy RLC

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**MIXED:** George Osborne delivered his budget speech to the Commons on Wednesday



# George pulls £15m driverless car route on the A2/M2 out of his hat

But Labour chiefs in the county slam his latest spending plans as 'terrible'

**By Tom Pyman**  
tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

**F**ROM ushering in a major route for driverless cars, to all our schools being told they must become academies, George Osborne's budget was yet another with wide-ranging impact.

A rise in tax-free personal allowance, transport improvements in the north and a freeze on beer, cider and spirits duties was enough for many to raise a glass.

But here political opponents, unsurprisingly, slated it.

Gordon Cowan, leader of the La-

bour group on KCC, told KoS: "It's another typical George Osborne budget, where he's announced that he's missed his targets.

"How are we supposed to trust him when he said he'd eliminate the deficit by 2015, but here we are in 2016 and there's no sign of it? They are set to borrow more than any other government and you wonder why because of the cuts he has made, particularly to local authorities.

"Half a million people are losing disability benefits but big corporations are getting tax breaks – it's a budget that is terrible and a failure for the people of this country."

We take a look at some of the key issues impacting on the county.

## TRANSPORT: USHERING IN NEW WORLD OF MOTORING

KENT is set to pioneer the use of driverless technology after chancellor George Osborne announced a £15 million 'connected corridor' running from London to Dover.

Running along the A2 and M2, it will see a string of communication devices allowing vehicles to "communicate wirelessly with infrastructure and potentially other vehicles". Quite exactly what that means remains to be seen, but the Department of Transport told KoS on Friday talks were already under way with partners Kent County



Council, Highways England and Transport for London to run initial feasibility tests.

When we spoke to KCC, however, they said they were not aware of the scheme.

The DoT said the scheme should be fitted and running full tests by 2017-18 and that it was a "great boost to Kent".

George Osborne said he would shortly look to change legislation to allow driverless cars on our roads.

The technology will allow data on traffic jams or weather conditions to be relayed between driverless vehicles and thus allowing them to alter their driving according. The chancellor has previously stated he wants the UK to be world leaders in harnessing the technology.

## EDUCATION: ACADEMY CONCERNS

ONE of the most controversial announcements was plans to turn every school in the country into an academy by 2020, thus giving councils like Medway and KCC no control over education in the county.

Chancellor George Osborne told MPs: "We are going to complete the task of setting schools free from local education bureaucracy," and, perhaps, unsurprisingly, KCC responded with concern.

Cabinet member for education Roger Gough said: "It was not a big surprise because this has been flagged for some time but I still have a number of reservations.

"I'm not hostile to academisation – I think it can be a solution, but it's not the solution.

"I think the evidence this is all based on is extremely poor, and I don't like that this is a forced process – schools' own wishes

will vary and quite rightly, and we have always favoured a mixed economy.

"Finally, there are issues with accountability which need to be cleared up because we are not being removed entirely from the world of education."

Labour group leader Cllr Cowan added: "It's an absolute disgrace. It's going to fall flat on its face, and who is going to pick up the pieces when it does?

"Much like when they did it with the promise of free school meals, the homework has not been done.

"We have a duty of care and it's being taken out of the local authority's hands. I'm not sure what planet Nicky Morgan [education secretary] is on but it isn't this one."

■ See inside for our Education in Kent pull-out guide.

## BUSINESS: BOOST

THE budget was hailed by the Federation of Small Businesses in Kent, with many of its members being among the 600,000 firms receiving 'business rates relief' as of next April – which translates to savings of nearly £6,000 a year.

Mike Cherry, policy director at FSB, said: "He has listened to our calls for the tax system to be made simpler for small businesses and the self-employed and taken important action on business rates.

"The combined measures announced on business rates – the single biggest tax cut in the budget – will be viewed by our members as a welcome and important step on the road to fundamental reform.

"Altogether, these measures should help to drive productivity and boost small business confidence levels, which have faltered recently."

## FUEL: 'MISSED A CHANCE'

NEWS that fuel duty will be frozen at 57.95p per litre was generally welcomed, although some groups felt the chancellor could have gone one further and cut prices by 3p per litre.

The Tunbridge Wells-based Freight Transport Association says it told Mr Osborne in its pre-budget submission that a reduction would make an important contribution towards protecting the UK economy.

It added that industry currently pays around £7billion annually in duty, and an increase of just one penny would add £470 a year to the cost of running a 44-tonne truck, which would have a huge impact on transport operators.

James Hookham, FTA's deputy chief executive, said: "He missed a chance to give a boost to the stuttering economy by reducing

the tax on an essential business input." Howard Cox, founder of Cranbrook-based pressure group FairFuelUK, said: "I'm delighted because we've been tirelessly campaigning and have received the support of 131 MPs since November, so our concerns have been heard."

However, Mr Cox bemoaned the lack of attention given to the Dartford Crossing, compared with the Severn bridge which saw tolls slashed by half.

"He should have had something in his budget to help tackle the issues there for sure," he said.

"They need to sort it out before considering this other Thames crossing – we want the local people to enjoy cleaner air and you have to wonder if Dartford has become forgotten."



# Tragic tot's family rue hospital role

When images of little Fay Burdett were released by her parents showing the impact of meningitis it sparked a huge response which led to the Commons...

**T**HE parents of a Kent toddler whose death prompted hundreds of thousands of people to back a campaign calling for greater provision of the meningitis B vaccine have said there are "issues" with diagnosing the disease.

Neil and Jenny Burdett, whose two-year-old daughter Faye died on Valentine's Day after an 11-day fight with the disease, said they were "not taken seriously" by a "dismissive" health worker.

An image of the youngster, from Maidstone, covered in a rash and lying in a hospital bed just before she died was shared by her family.

The harrowing picture prompted a flood of support for a petition calling for the meningitis B vaccine to be given to all children.

Faye's father Neil Burdett told MPs that the family shared the picture to try and prevent others from suffering the same fate.

"That was just to raise awareness, if nothing else, to stop other families and other children from going through the two weeks we

had just had," he said.

Giving evidence to MPs from the petitions committee and the health committee, Faye's mother Jenny Burdett said she called the NHS 111 number to give details of Faye's symptoms and they sent a paramedic, who advised them to see their family doctor. The GP sent the toddler straight to hospital but she was initially diagnosed with a viral infection and sent home.

Mrs Burdett said: "Our failing, we believe, is when we got to the hospital. We were, I wouldn't say pushed aside..."

Mr Burdett continued: "Not taken seriously I think, and the GP was not taken seriously."

Mrs Burdett added: "She was dismissive."

Mr Burdett said he felt medics were too cautious in suggesting that a child may have meningitis.

"No one wants to make that decision," he added.

He told MPs: "We were there [at hospital] for two hours and discharged with a viral infection. Six hours later we were back there and



**DEBATE:** Health committee spoke to the parents of tragic Faye Burdett, pictured below.

she was critically ill. So we do obviously have issues with diagnosing it."

He continued: "There is definitely a difficulty with diagnosing it, either that or they don't want to jump to that but I would say that there is an issue there."

Mr Burdett said his daughter would still be alive if she had not been misdiagnosed.

"It's that seven hour gap where she was given no treatment - that's when we lost Faye because the meningitis was allowed to progress too far," he said.

He said when they returned to hospital for the second time, the care they received was "incredible" but it was too late.

He added: "They knew exactly what it was and started treating

straight away. If it had happened six hours earlier we would probably still have our little girl."

The Burdett's originally took Faye to Maidstone Hospital before she was transferred to the specialist Evelina Children's Hospital in London.

Ex-England rugby captain Matt Dawson told MPs there needs to be more awareness of the condition.

He joined the campaign following his two-year-old son Sam's battle with meningitis W, which he survived, in February this year.

Also giving evidence to MPs was Lee Booth, who instigated the most-signed online petition in parliamentary history.

Mr Booth, who started the petition after one of his daughters was refused the vaccine on age grounds, told the committee: "What price do you put on a child's life at the end of the day? We have got a vaccine out there, we should be using it."

More than 823,000 people signed the petition but the government rejected calls for the meningitis B vaccine to be given to all children, with officials saying the NHS budget is a "finite resource".

The Department of Health has said its priority is to vaccinate those children considered most at risk from meningitis B.

It said it is following guidance from the joint committee on vaccination and immunisation, which advises the government on the cost-effectiveness of vaccinations.

Speaking after the hearing, Mr Dawson added: "Cost effectiveness gets mentioned numerous times in the response from the Government so you know it's high on their agenda but what are the ramifications of these children that are maimed by this disease? The cost of that to the tax payers is absolutely enormous."

"I would like to think that it would be slightly more cost effective to have the vaccine rather than treat it and having to go through the pain and emotion that these families have."

A vaccine to protect against meningitis B is available on the NHS for babies aged two months, followed by a second dose at four months and a booster at 12 months.

The vaccine was introduced as part of the routine immunisation schedule last September.

Parents who wish to have older children vaccinated must pay privately, although a worldwide shortage of the vaccine Bexsero means stocks are very low.

Manufacturer GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) hopes to have increased stocks in the UK by the summer. The NHS programme is unaffected.



**DEVASTATION:** Faye's decline

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**ISSUE:** The issue of expense is preventing a vaccine roll-out

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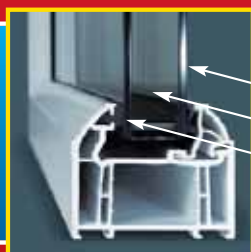
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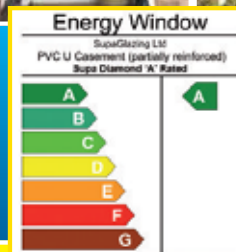
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# PR gaffes which overshadow all the good work

**Chris Britcher** reflects on a rollercoaster four years in office for Kent's inaugural police and crime commissioner, Ann Barnes, and argues that while she was the best candidate for the job, public relations misjudgements made it impossible to imagine she'd be re-elected...

**T**HE END of Ann Barnes' era as the county's first ever police and crime commissioner was not delivered by the ballot box, but it surely would have been.

Instead, after refusing to be drawn on her intentions to stand again in May's elections for months, she hid the announcement at the foot of an email newsletter published last Saturday afternoon, reflecting on her time in office.

It was a bit like shouting 'bye' when you're halfway through the door.

But, come election time, not even the most optimistic of supporters would have bet the house on her winning a second term. Her reign in the post dogged by misjudgements in the world of public relations which would not only undermine all that she did, but should act as a reminder to us all as to why those in power are so keen to keep their public personas so carefully stage managed.

Because her reputation was damaged beyond repair not through any policy or funding decision, but through a lack of thought and careful consideration of her actions; most significantly that of her public image.

And, to a certain extent, you can sympathise with her.

After all, the role was created to have a high profile and for the people of the county to know who she was, what her office stood for, and that she was accessible.

She had to court publicity. The problem is she did so without any thought of the consequences any public relations advisor worth their salt should have been able to identify from the off.

At the start of her reign she told one of our reporters how she would always be on the end of a phone when we needed comment. Ever since the debacle of the Channel 4 documentary in 2014, she has laid so low her media profile was delivered only by carefully worded press releases and a notable refusal to be interviewed.

For a publicly funded post, it, understandably, saw what little sympathy for her that existed among the Kent media, evaporate fast.

We are, after all, here to hold such people to account.

Her convincing victory in the inaugural election back in 2012 demonstrated she was felt to be a safe pair of hands – having previously led the low-key Kent Police Authority – an office the commissioner replaced.

But the poor turnout (a little over 16 per cent of those eligible to vote dragged themselves out to place their cross in the relevant box) demonstrated that the public appetite was far from whetted for the role.

It wasn't just Kent where apathy won a landslide. Nationwide we collectively shrugged our shoulders and continued to debate as to what was the point of the new role.

The role may have been cooked up by the Conservatives, but the right-wing press were desperate for blood. Especially for the strong woman standing on an independent ticket that romped to victory in the Garden of England. They waited, patiently, for this new era of publicly-funded figures to make a mistake so they could feed. And Ann Barnes not only served them up a feast, but never seemed to learn her lesson.

The appointment of Paris Brown, a 17-year-old from Sheerness as the youth commissioner in 2013 was an error that pulled the rug from beneath Mrs Barnes and she would never find her feet again.

The error was Mrs Barnes' pursuit of publicity for a role that was almost as pointless, in the eyes of many, as the PCC itself; a rather patronising nod towards the youth of the county, who feel a disconnect from the law enforcement machine.

She took Miss Brown, who she proclaimed as part of a solution to that very issue, into a world of a dazzling spotlight and on a quiet news day secured acres of publicity. But it lasted a mere 48 hours.

Because when the PR machine rolled up at the Mail on Sunday offices they walked straight into a trap so obvious, it seemed like whoever was advising Mrs Barnes should also be the first to be sacked.

And made every other journalist kick themselves for not having found it first.

They had checked out the Twitter feed of Miss Brown and discovered tweets apparently making racist and homophobic comments, and relating to under-age drinking. Hiring a teenager for a high profile role? Surely, you would think, they'd check that her social media presence did not contain any nasty surprises.

No sooner had she trumpeted her arrival, Mrs Barnes was sounding the death knell for Miss Brown's career prospects in her office.

More remarkably, she wheeled the poor girl out in front of the media to make a tearful

#### HER REPLACEMENT...

CONFIRMED candidates for Kent PCC so far include:

**Conservative:** Matthew Scott

**Labour:** Tristan Osborne

**Ukip:** Henry Bolton

**Lib Dem:** Dave Naghi

**English Democrats:** Steve Uncles

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



**SHAME:** She was the right woman for the job on paper, but her bid to raise her profile was also her undoing



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## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

apology. The failure to check social media may have been unforgivable. Exposing a 17-year-old to the ferocity of Fleet Street in attack mode is something quite different. As a former teacher, she should have known better.

No sooner had that fuss died down, did trailers begin for a Channel 4 documentary: Meet the Police Commissioner – a fly-on-the-wall show which followed Mrs Barnes.

It rather neatly encapsulated her time in office. Half had to be viewed from behind hands covering the face... it was excruciating stuff. The 'onion' police model she couldn't explain; her inability to explain her own role; taking her dogs into the office to bound around during important meetings. It was painful to watch.

The second half, however, saw her working hard to try and fight for funding for the county's force; a battle fought in the face of relentless cuts to public spending.

The problem, of course, is that when someone asks about the show, or her time in office, you cannot help but mention the headline grabbing antics first rather than the worthy stuff. That's human nature, for better or for worst. Just ask Tony Blair.

And that's without mentioning the second youth commissioner – hired only for a relationship with a married Tory councillor to emerge and cast a shadow she could never really step out of.

But while her critics celebrate her decision to step down, it would be remiss not to highlight the fact she did an awful lot of good.

She was, after all, and regardless of

your political allegiance, a worthy winner of that first election. She was the only candidate who was pretty much doing the job anyway.

Heading the Kent Police Authority meant she had existing relationships and knew the force inside out. For a role with such responsibility, she was the best candidate for the job.

What's more, establishing the county's first dedicated Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) is a legacy she should feel justly proud of.

What's more she hounded Whitehall for additional funding across her term in office and took her role of developing a strong link with the public seriously. Kent Police as an organisation is well run, well governed and well respected. She had a role to play in ensuring that is the case.

In person, she was down to earth, friendly and always appeared responsive.

Of course, while we may look back and collectively scoff at Ann Barnes' time in office, it may well transpire that she was actually doing a better job than we gave her credit for. But she somehow managed to turn even those who supported her and make them unable to mount a powerful enough case for her to stay.

Finally, perhaps, she took some ad-

vice and listened to it when she made the decision not to stand again.

In the weeks leading up to the election in 2012, we sent reporters out on the street to ask the public if they recognised the candidates. Barely any did. For better or for worse, Ann Barnes became a well known personality. The only problem is that it was primarily for negative, as well as positive, things.

## THE MESSAGE THAT REVEALED SHE WAS QUITTING

ANN Barnes' statement:

"As election day approaches for the next PCC I have decided that I will not be a candidate.

"Fifteen years – including, since 2012, service in this intense and all-consuming role – is probably long enough, and I am content that I have delivered what I said I would and Kent Police is in a very strong and sustainable position for the future.

"To those putting themselves forward for election in May I give you this advice. Be prepared to work around the clock. This is not a part-time position. It is an all-consuming role that requires and deserves that attention.

"Listen to the public. They elect us into post, and ultimately they know best about what they want and the service they receive. Support the officers and staff delivering the service. They are incredible people doing an amazing job. When you have to challenge, remember that mistakes can happen and look at the intentions as well as the actions of those involved. Put the people of Kent first, not Westminster, not a political party, not yourself.

"I have raised the profile of police and crime commissioners – not always in the way that I intended, it must be said. People

need to know who they can come to when they have an issue about how policing is delivered, and I want to thank the tens of thousands of people who have written to me over the last four years and engaged in that debate about how we improve policing and address concerns. It is important to point out that they are not all complaining either. Many ordinary people across the county have felt the need to tell me in person and in writing what a great job our police officers and staff do in Kent. They are proud of them, rightly so, and I will never cease to be proud of them either."



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**TOUGH:** The uncertainty surrounding the way we will vote is unlikely to settle troubled markets. Dr Filippaios, right, talks us through the key issues.

# EU referendum: What is impact on business to remain or leave?

In the latest of our series of independent reviews on key issues determining how we may vote in June's European Union referendum, **Dr Fragkiskos Filippaios**, reader in international business at the University of Kent's Kent Business School, looks at the sometimes complex world of business...

On the 24th of June, European Union might be faced with an unprecedented challenge. For the first time in the history of the Union a member state, following a referendum, might decide to exit.

So far the history of the Union since its inception, back in the 1950s, has focused on enlarging primarily towards the east.

Despite the significant economic benefits of this enlargement it is also undisputable that this rapid growth made reaching consensus on important topics a very difficult, if not impossible task, with the recent immigration crisis clearly highlighting the deficiencies of the Union and its inability to come up with a commonly agreed plan of action that would service the interests of all 28 member states.

What would be the implications for British businesses should the outcome of the referendum be one that points towards the exit? A number of factors might determine the final outcome.

It is crucial to clarify, first of all, that the impact of an exit might be significantly different for large corporates and small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

The factors that will determine the outcome can be summarised in the following: Trade, foreign direct investment, employment and access to talent, business regulations and rigidity and uncertainty in the overall economic environment.

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### TRADE

Currently, according to data from Eurostat, the UK exports approximately 48 per cent of its total exports to other European Union countries.

The EU is, therefore, a key market for UK businesses.

At the same time, the UK imports approximately 53 per cent of its total imports from EU countries. This is equivalent to almost six per cent of total exports for the remaining 27 members of the union.

It can, therefore, be inferred the UK is also an important market for the remaining EU countries.

A decision to exit the EU will create significant uncertainty to the trade status of UK with regards to the EU and could possibly mean less favourable trade conditions for a lot of UK businesses. On the positive side, the UK will become an independent negotiator and could have its own trade agreements with key emerging markets such as China and India.

The overall outcome will depend on the ability of the UK governments in the next few years to negotiate a positive trade status with the EU and the key emerging markets.

### FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI)

Companies coming from EU countries have been significant investors to the UK markets.

This trend will not change irrespective of the outcome, given that the motivations of those companies are to take advantage of the UK market

size, the well-developed infrastructure and the highly educated and skilled labour force.

Key investors to the UK, outside the EU, include the US, Japan, India, Canada, Australia, China and the UAE.

According to data from FDI Markets.com (a database provided by Financial Times that monitors investments around the world) the key motive of these international investors is proximity to regional and global markets (with 35 per cent of investors identifying this as a key motive).

A lot of companies from the above mentioned locations currently see the UK as an entry point to the continental Europe that provides geographic proximity complemented by well-developed infrastructure and a strong institutional framework. This motive will become significantly weaker should the UK decide to exit the union and might lead not only to smaller amounts of FDI but also to some existing investments leaving the UK for other EU markets.

On the other hand, the second most important motive (with 29 per cent of investors) is the domestic market growth. This indicates that clearly the impact on FDI might not be as substantial as one would imagine.

### EMPLOYMENT AND ACCESS TO TALENT

The arguments here are closely related with immigration and emigration flows.

According to Eurostat, in 2014, there were just over 500,000 EU immigrants in the UK and approximately

315,000 UK emigrants abroad. Although this clearly shows that the flows are not balanced, it is important to look closely at the demographics. The vast majority of immigrants, close to 50 per cent are in the 20-34 age range, with high level qualifications.

These are usually highly educated professionals that are attracted by the low level of UK unemployment and providing significant talent to UK businesses.

An exit decision will create uncertainty over the status of these individuals as residents and might stop the inflow of highly-trained human capital to the UK economy. On the emigration side, the demographics are much more mixed. Both the age and education spread of those leaving the UK to live in another EU country are almost equally spread between young active and more mature non-active parts of the population, whilst there is no clear pattern regarding their education level. A decision to exit the union will give UK more control over its immigration policy but might also create a lack of talent with detrimental effects for UK businesses.

### BUSINESS REGULATIONS AND RIGIDITY

The EU has significant influence on business regulations. These business regulations are often complex and rigid and, therefore, create significant problems primarily for SMEs.

It is estimated by the government's

impact assessment that the possible cost of these regulations is more than £27 billion every year.

Getting out of the EU will allow UK administration to have stronger control over these regulations and, perhaps, facilitate business by removing obstacles. On the other hand, this issue of overregulating has already been identified by the union and a number of working groups have already been established to come up with possible ways of addressing it.

It is worth highlighting that UK companies that still wish to do business in EU, either through trade or investment, will have to comply with EU regulations anyway and thus the only impact of exiting the Union will be on domestic operations.

### UNCERTAINTY IN THE OVERALL ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

It is evident from the all the above that the impact on businesses will depend substantially on the ability of current and future UK governments to renegotiate UK's relationship with the EU and independently negotiate trade and investment agreements with other key economies around the world. This process could take more than a couple of years and in the meantime uncertainty on the day after the referendum will definitely have a negative impact on businesses.

**What do you think? Should we stay or leave the EU? Share your views and join the debate. Email [editorial@kosmedia.co.uk](mailto:editorial@kosmedia.co.uk) and see our letters' page.**



# Delayed benefits of our permanent link to France

Thirty years since an historic deal signed in Canterbury, one academic says only now is Kent finally reaping the rewards of the Channel Tunnel

By Chris Murphy  
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

IT HAS taken 30 years since the agreement was first signed to build the Channel Tunnel for its impact in Kent to be properly felt, a leading academic says.

And that's only thanks to High Speed One (HS1) and its super-fast service to London.

A major conference took place on Wednesday to assess the impact of the link entitled Twenty Years Under the Channel and Beyond: Accessible Regions, Growing Regions?.

Hosted at Canterbury Cathedral's Lodge Hotel, it marked the 30th anniversary of the signing of the intergovernmental treaty of Canterbury which inaugurated the tunnel project, will brought together academic experts, local authority officers and those connected with the project from both sides of the English Channel.

Organised by French association Rails et Histoire, it forms part of two

events – the other taking place in Paris next month.

After the deal was signed in 1986, the tunnel opened for business in May 1994.

Key note speaker was European transport economics expert Professor Roger Vickerman, of the University of Kent.

He said: "The focus here is on Kent where the claim is that there was no impact until HS1 was completed."

"It is almost impossible to make any claim for the UK as a whole as the impact is so widespread across the country. But again it is more the entire network that is important rather than the tunnel itself."

"Controversy still exists over whether transport infrastructure is a condition for economic growth and development."

It examined a variety of aspects of the tunnel's operation 22 years after it opened and focused on the wider issue of the impact of the possible expansion of the high speed network into other areas of the UK.

The professor said: "The main con-

clusions to draw from this analysis are mixed. The Channel Tunnel, by itself, has not had a major impact on the Kent economy in either direction. However, the improvements in connectivity to London, and indeed much of the rest of England, resulting from HS1 have begun to have a positive impact on economic performance especially in Ashford and Dartford [where the Ashford International and Ebbsfleet International stations are based] but also in Canterbury."

The academic points out one complements the other, and added: "HS1 only exists because of the international links via the Channel Tunnel, although the regional services were the justification for Government aid to the project."

"The improved access to the continent, and by rail to London and beyond, is mitigated by continuing problems of road access to the rest of the UK with congestion at the Dartford Crossing and on the M25. Moreover the costs to the Kent economy of disruption to cross-Channel services leading to Operation Stack are a fur-

ther negative. Some of the gains have been tempered by the loss of the major pharmaceutical research operation at Sandwich, although there are signs that the enterprise zone created on this site is beginning to show positive results."

He added: "The lack of a coherent set of accompanying policies in the UK could limit the impact in comparison with the situation in France."

"Parallel studies in France to mark the 10th anniversary of the tunnel showed not all the plans had been real-



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ised, but that the focus on Lille [which also has an international terminal] had led to economic benefits there at the expense of other parts of the Nord-Pas de Calais region, especially the coastal areas around Calais."

That is also happening in the UK,

he said, adding: "The relative performance of Dartford suggests that it is easier to create economic benefits at a location that offers a multimodal crossroads, especially where, as in the case of Dartford, there are additional benefits to be derived from the Thames

Gateway project including a supply of brownfield land for redevelopment. Coastal locations do not typically offer this degree of multi-directional accessibility."

The emergence of Bluewater and particularly the new town at Ebbsfleet



## 'WORLD WONDER' OFF OUR SHORE

DEEP under the English Channel, the Channel Tunnel links Kent to France using tunnels that are just over 13 miles long.

It took 13,000 workers with 11 boring machines to complete the work which started in 1988 and was operational in 1994. One of the machines was sold on eBay for £40,000 in 2004.

The tunnel is now regarded as a world wonder.

Kent grew by 90 acres when the spoil was moved to create Samphire Hoe - an area just on the outskirts of Dover - that's enough earth to fill Wembley Stadium 13 times over.

And it's proved a huge success

- although a consequence has been significant damage to the once booming cross-Channel ferry industry.

Park all the vehicles that have gone through the tunnel since its opening, and the queue would reach the Moon. The people inside them is four times the UK population.

And don't forget the million plus pets that have gone through the tunnels.

They would have had some company if the 1802 idea for a tunnel using horse-drawn carriages had got off the ground.

As it is, shuttle trains are now regulars and are somewhat bigger at three quarters of a kilometre long.

can be linked to the arrival of the Channel Tunnel and HS1, he said.

The professor said: "The latter is assisted by the connectivity provided by the international station on HS1, but the housing development did not require this, the transport development simply helped unlock the potential of the site.

"Ashford poses another set of problems. It was clearly recognised in all the early studies as the main potential gainer from the tunnel.

"A major railway junction it has connections in many directions not found in most other Kent locations. The provision of the international station was a major concession to Kent during the negotiations over compensation for the adverse impact of construction and to ensure that Kent was not effectively by-passed.

"This was reinforced by the final route of HS1 through the centre of the town and serving the international station, albeit with a greater time penalty to stopping trains than incurred at Ebbsfleet and a resulting lower frequency of trains. The main failure was to ensure this development was more effectively integrated into the urban fabric of the town, as in for example Lyon or Lille."

**■ What do you think? Has the Channel Tunnel and HS1 had a major impact on the county? Was all the disruption caused by its construction worth it in the end? Share your views and join the debate. Email us at [editorial@kosmedia.co.uk](mailto:editorial@kosmedia.co.uk) or write to: The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP.**

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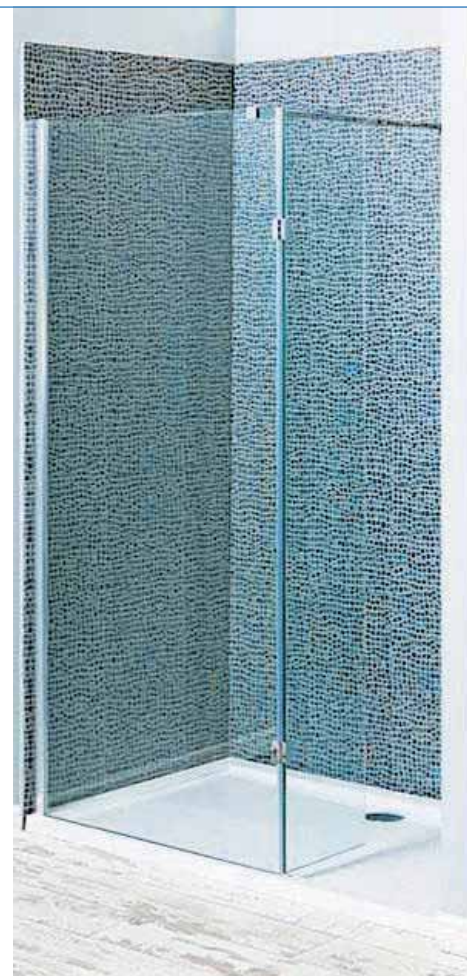
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# 'We cannot take any more roads'

Kent County Council's Green Party councillor **Martin Whybrow**, (pictured) writes for KoS and asks just how much infrastructure is Kent willing and able to accept, and says the proposed Lower Thames Crossing in Gravesham reflects a failure in strategic thinking

**W**HEN is Kent County Council going to say, 'enough is enough'? When is the local authority going to stop kowtowing to Highways England, as it is doing with both the proposed Stanford lorry park and Lower Thames Crossing?

There are two strategic questions that never seem to be raised, let alone answered:

■ **First, how much infrastructure is Kent willing and able to accept?**

■ **Second, what is it doing to the quality of life in the county?**

How many KCC strategies emphasise the 'health, well-being and happiness of residents'? Where do those sentiments fit with road schemes such as this?

Official predictions are for an in-

crease in Kent of heavy goods vehicle (HGV) volumes of 43 per cent and light goods vehicle (LGV) volumes of 88 per cent by 2035. Does anyone truly believe that is sustainable?

The situation will only worsen at Dartford if there is that sort of increase, while another part of the country would be similarly lumbered with all of the associated environmental and human costs if another crossing was added. Meanwhile, of course, all of that increase also impacts much of the rest of the country's roads, so no part of Kent is immune.

KCC should focus on removing HGVs and LGVs from Kent's roads and reducing traffic volumes as a whole.

It should not be agreeing to the destruction of ever more Kent countryside and the blighting of ever more Kent lives (and, let's not forget, Essex countryside and lives, in this instance).

It should not accept the loss of more ancient woodland, another intrusion on the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and further degrading of the Thames Estuary marshes.

It should not lay down more concrete and tarmac. A strategy that says, 'bring it on, let's have more traffic', is a dereliction of KCC's duty.

KCC's own proposed response to the Lower Thames Crossing consulta-



**FUTURE:** Computer impression of how the crossing will look

tion states that it will have "a very large adverse effect on biodiversity" and "a moderate to large adverse effect on noise pollution". It will also have a large adverse effect on noise pollution and I don't believe for a moment that it won't have a large adverse effect on air quality.

Is KCC's Kent environmental strategy worth the recycled paper it's written on? And are all of those other strategies that talk about promoting health and wellbeing just empty words?

We should seek to head off the problem at source. KCC should step up and take the lead by looking strategically at this massive challenge for our county and for the country. It should:

**1.** Pull its finger out and finally produce a Kent rail freight action plan, something it promised to do several years ago but seemingly just couldn't be bothered with. There is the rail capacity but far too much bureaucracy and far too little will.

**2.** Have a real focus on how to use ports other than Dover, so that freight stays off the roads until it is as close as possible to its final destination. It is no good waving the white flag and saying this isn't commercially viable for freight operators – how can they be incentivised to change their ways of working?

**3.** Look at how we can encourage local economies, create jobs, build resilience and reduce demand instead

of importing more and more. Amidst the challenges, there is also opportunity.

One other issue related to the Lower Thames Crossing is to do with democracy and local decision-making. Highways England is a law unto itself, with far too few checks and counters.

I have responded to its consultation and, as with the lorry park one, it is clearly flawed. Highways England lobbies from the start for the answer that it wants.

The consultation PDF is a PR document and the 'fact sheets' are nothing of the sort.

It is easy to criticise alternative voices as wishful thinking or 'Nimbyism' but surely the belief that we can just carry on doing the same thing, pursuing never ending growth on a planet with finite resources, is the true madness.

Too often, KCC's response to this county's major challenges is short-term, more of the same type-fixes, which truly is a road to ruin.

**What do you think? Do you share the councillor's views or oppose them? Join the debate – email us at [editorial@kosmedia.co.uk](mailto:editorial@kosmedia.co.uk) or write to: The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford, TN23 1PP. We'll feature the best on our letters' page.**



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# Mast plans spell double trouble

Campaigners demand to know why twin 1,000ft towers need to be built within mile of each other

By Luke May

luke.may@archant.co.uk

**A** ROW is brewing over plans to build two huge new communication masts less than a mile apart.

Two separate US firms are going through the planning process for 1,000ft masts in Richborough, near Sandwich.

But a campaign group is demanding to know why the projects – which both want to relay financial data to and from the continent – cannot be combined into just one mast.

One of the applicants says it is happy to co-operate with the rival masts, but the other is refusing to enter into discussions.

And when Kent on Sunday contacted it this week, it dodged the question.

Both masts will rival London's The Shard in height and be situated close to the site of the former cooling towers at Richborough power station – demolished four years ago.

It is thought while the masts will be significant in size, the benefits for local communities will come from other communication firms – such as the big mobile phone providers – buying space on the mast to boost their signals in the local area.

Canadian communications company Vigilant Global UK has already lodged a planning application with Dover District Council for a 1,049ft mast on the former power station site. Vigilant Global is owned by Chicago trading firm DRW.

Now infrastructure company New Lines Networks (NLN) has started a series of public exhibitions ahead of its application for a mast of similar size just a mile away at Kings End Farm.

It insists it has approached Vigilant Global about joining forces for just one tower but, so far, "they haven't shown interest in developing a partnership".

But CPRE Kent – the local branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England – says the double plans are madness.

A spokesperson said: "We're appalled at the prospect of a rash of super masts polluting the ancient landscape of east Kent.

"Richborough Fort is where



**HUGE:** Stretching 1,000ft up into the sky, the two masts could be within a mile of each other at Richborough

the Romans landed, is Grade I-listed and a scheduled monument.

"The 'convenience' of line of sight to Europe is being promoted without consideration for the communities, landscape and heritage that is being damaged.

"The question is: why can't they just share one mast?"

Chief executive at NLN, Sean McNamara, told KoS: "We remain ready and willing to work with any competitor to establish a fair and equal single mast solution.

"We believe that a single mast will minimise community impact and provide the community attractive benefits.

"We have expressed our interest to Vigilant in working together to share a single mast on truly fair and equal terms, but to date they haven't shown interest in developing a partnership on such terms."

It claims the mast will be "imperceptible" from 5km away.

But when KoS asked Vigilant Global about teaming up, it dodged the question, instead sending us a statement which said: "The planning application was submitted in January and we have been working with officers to provide the technical information required to determine the application.

"The mast has been designed from the outset to be available to a wide range of users, including mobile phone operators, TV and digital radio service providers, the emergency services and other financial networks.

"We have already committed to accommodate VFast (a wireless broadband company) and Dover Community Radio and are actively engaging with leading mobile phone operators.

"We are also working with local stakeholders to deliver a comprehensive community benefits programme.

"Vigilant Global has a very strong track record of working closely with the communities in which we operate, and of involving local stakeholders in shaping what those benefits are."

So why Richborough?

NLN's Sean McNamara explained: "The east Kent coast is one of the few parts of the UK that is close enough to the European mainland to provide the type of links we are seeking to establish."

NLN is currently hosting a range of exhibitions in the area, with the next set for Wednesday at Minster Village Hall.

If all goes to plan, NLN is expected to hand in a full application request to Dover District Council in the spring, with construction set to start later this year if permitted.

■ What do you think? Share your views and join the debate. Email [editorial@kos-media.co.uk](mailto:editorial@kos-media.co.uk).

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PULL-OUT  
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## County chiefs hit back as Ofsted chief blames leaders for exodus

By Chris Murphy

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

POOR leadership in schools has been highlighted as one of the key reasons bright young teachers are turning their back on the profession.

The head of Ofsted, Sir Michael Wilshaw, made the claims last week, saying that teachers needed to toughen up to ensure they were not failing our children.

He said England's schools needed more "battlers, bruisers and battle-axes" to raise standards, rather than appeasers who are prepared to put up with mediocrity.

But his comments have been criticised by the Kent voice of one major teachers' union as "simplistic nonsense".

However, one of the county's leading teacher training providers says

poor leadership is an issue which is in need of addressing.

Sir Michael said that in many secondary schools, inspectors still see scruffy pupils, sloppy worksheets instead of textbooks and low level disruption.

He argued that if England wants to do as well as other nations, every secondary school needs to have a good atmosphere of scholarship.

Speaking in a panel debate at a Sutton Trust conference in London, the Ofsted boss said that if secondary schools are to improve, then it is important that good teachers stay in the classroom and see teaching as a career.

He said: "I've spoken to Teach First graduates on many occasions and one of the depressing things I hear from them is that they leave university, do their training, go into schools

full of vim and vigour and enthusiasm wanting to do well by children in disadvantaged communities and are put off by the poor culture in the schools that they're going into, by poor behaviour.

"And what they see - because they are bright young things, and very perceptive people - is just poor leadership. Unless we get leadership right then we will still continue to have problems.

"Our problems in the main, reside in the secondary sector, where recruitment and retention is most difficult. Secondary schools are not very good, in my view. If we're going to match the best jurisdictions then we've got to improve our secondary school performance, and we won't get

Continued on page 27



## Delight as study centre chief lands top education award

KATHRYN Liggett (pictured, left, receiving her award from Julie Askew of Bromley College) has scooped the education award at the Kent Women in Business Awards 2016.

Ms Liggett took over the Kumon Canterbury Study Centre last July, offering maths and English programmes to children of all ages and abilities.

A panel of judges reviewed all nominations and announced the

winners at a gala dinner this month at the Mercure Maidstone Great Danes Hotel.

Ms Liggett said: "The judges were impressed by how quickly I had made an impact on students' learning since July. They commented that they admired my approach to inclusivity in that I individualised the work for each student and work hard to make sure every child meets their full potential."

Picture: Schumann Photography

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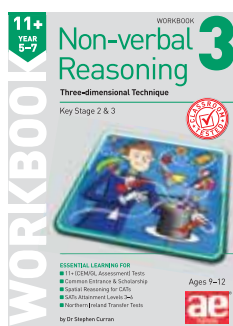
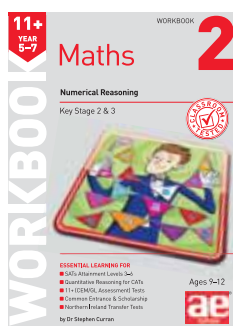
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# All change at two of the county's major secondaries

Chatham Grammar School for Boys is all set to admit girls in 2017 amid concerns over allocations, while the Community College Whitstable is hoping a move to an academy will reverse its fortunes...

**T**HE changing face of the county's major schools continues with one boys' grammar on the verge of changing its name and admitting girls, while another is set to be consumed within one of the county's major academy groups.

In Medway, Chatham Grammar School for Boys – one of the county's top performing grammar schools – is set to admit girls for the first time in September 2017.

While on the north Kent coast, the under-performing Community College Whitstable is to become part of the Swale Academies Trust after a turbulent few years, which have seen the long-time head teacher shown the door after exam results tumbled.

Both major moves are still subject to final approval, but both seem inevitable.

For Chatham, it will mean the school – part of the Thinking Schools Academy Trust – morphs into the Holcombe Grammar School when the 2017 academic year begins.

With the governing body disbanded in December – all decisions are now being taken by the board of directors – and the consultation into the changes concluding in January, there are concerns over the squeeze it will put on grammar school places for boys.

A view echoed by local MP Tracey Crouch and Medway Council itself.

Education consultant Peter Read explains: "The simple reality is that this is yet another example of academies now being in a position to make controversial decisions in their own interest, with no accountability to the local community, or consideration of the effects on the education of all local school children."

But the school insists the concerns are unfounded. It said: "Firstly, by providing additional places we can demonstrate that there are sufficient places available within the council's own figures to meet the need for selective places for boys."

"Secondly, we are concerned that the council's figures are inaccurate in



**SWITCH:** Community College Whitstable is to become part of the Swale Academies Trust in a bid to drive up standards

that they consistently over estimate the need for grammar school places and consistently under estimate the excess capacity within the system.

"The local community consistently chooses one of the single sex boys schools over the other. The 2016-17 initial preferences showed that despite a good Ofsted report in 2014 and excellent GCSE results in summer 2015, four out of five preferences by those boys deemed selective was to attend the other single sex boys school. Therefore, the vast majority of parents have already expressed the choice year after year that they do not want single sex education at Chatham Grammar School for Boys. It is, therefore, appropriate to look at offering a different alternative for the local community to consider."

That decision to opt for alternative schools is likely to be a hangover from Ofsted's ruling in 2013 that the school should become the first grammar in the county to go into special measures.

Meanwhile, across the other side of

the county, the wind of change has blown swiftly through the Community College Whitstable (CCW).

It saw head teacher Helena Sullivan-Tighe suspended in November after mounting concerns over the school's progress.

The most recent league tables saw it hit just 28 per cent of pupils at GCSE securing the benchmark five A\*-C grades including English and maths. The target is 40 per cent.

The Swale Academies Trust, which already runs Westlands in Sittingbourne and the Sittingbourne Community College, is expected to take it over before the end of the current academic year.

In a letter to parents, chair of governors Clarissa Williams said the move would allow the school "to benefit from a sustainable and long-term model of high quality improvement based on good practice and innovation".

A meeting for parents takes place at the school on Tuesday to discuss the plans.

## Applying for 11-plus

PARENTS wanting their children to sit the Kent Test can apply for them to do so from June 1.

The exam which determines whether a child is suitable for a grammar school place will be sat shortly after the academic year begins for pupils starting Year 6 in September.

The window to apply runs from June 1 to July 1.

Schools are expected to receive details and application forms by the last week of May. Results of the exam are published in October.

Applications for the Medway Test are not yet confirmed.

## Teaching open days

ONE of the county's major teacher training colleges will be holding a number of open days at its sites across the county over the coming months.

Canterbury Christ Church University will hold undergraduate days at its city campus on June 12, at Broadstairs on June 18 and on its Medway site on July 2.

Applicants who have already been offered a place have an open day on April 16 in Canterbury. For full details see the university's website.

## Uni highlights STEM

YEAR 11 students took a trip to the University of Kent on Friday to get a taste of the potential of the scientific world.

Scientists from the uni's school of engineering and digital arts (EDA) introduced Year 11 pupils from local schools to the opportunities to be found in careers in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) at the free The Big Bang @ Discovery Park event in Sandwich.

At the last national event EDA attended, their Defeat Spectra spy technology challenge attracted more than 1,000 participants.

# Kent NUT describes Sir Michael Wilshaw's claims as 'simplistic nonsense'

Continued from page 25

social mobility unless that happens."

Teach First is a teacher training scheme that recruits top graduates from leading universities and trains them to work in schools in disadvantaged areas. One of its founding partners was Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU).

William Stow is head of the school of teacher education and development at CCCU. He told us: "There are a number of factors which deter teachers from staying in teaching, and poor leadership is one."

"But poor leadership comes in many guises, including placing excessive demands on teachers and blindly implementing ill-thought through government policy initiatives."

Sir Michael went on to say that inspectors can often tell how good a school is early on in a visit.

He said: "They sense it as soon as they go in. What do they see? First of all they don't see any staff at the school gates to see the children in. They see the uniform all over the place, those woolly jumpers that you see, not a smart uniform although there's a uniform policy, they see a lack of scholarship and deep learning in the school, heads down."

"They see sloppy, scrappy worksheets rather than textbooks, they see noisy corridors and low level disruption. That's what they see."

"And if we are really aiming for our children to do as well as South Korea and Hong Kong and China, we need to have, in every secondary school in

the country, a really good atmosphere and scholarship in that school."

He went on to say: "We need headteachers in our secondary schools that are going to be really transformative leaders, and we have not got enough of them."

"We need battlers, we need bruisers, we need battle-axes who are going to fight the good fight and are absolutely determined to get high standards. We have got too many appeasers in our secondary schools who are prepared to put up with mediocrity."

Mark Dickinson, the national executive member for the NASUWT teachers' union in Kent and Medway, said he thought the points were "interesting". He added: "I think the counter-point to that is schools need a lot more support to help them deal

with unruly behaviour."

"Over the last few years, the services available to schools have been cut for whatever reason, and I think most of the schools are doing the best job they can with the resources available to them."

"It's all very well to turn around and say that teachers need to be tougher, but the teachers in the classroom need support from the management and the management need support from the services that should be there to provide alternative arrangements for those pupils who are very difficult."

John Walder, the Kent representative for the National Union of Teachers (NUT), was less forgiving. He told us: "This seems to be simplistic nonsense. "Sir Michael has been wondering

why teachers are leaving the profession. There has always been unruly pupils and it is up to schools to deal with them. They need to properly train teachers to deal with pupils in classrooms and we need schools to manage things properly."

"In my experience there has always been incompetent teachers who are completely hopeless."

"Most of the problems of children who are not doing or behaving as they should and are getting away with it, is to do with the structure of school discipline, for instance, how it is managed."

"We need more teachers at one level and better organised schools at another."

**• What do you think? Share your views and join the debate. Email: [editorial@kosmedia.co.uk](mailto:editorial@kosmedia.co.uk).**



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**DISTRUST:** With teachers now obliged to report any signs of behaviour which could be early indications of radicalisation, is it a step too far towards a Big Brother state?

# Unease grows on teacher demands to identify early signs of radicalisation

University lecturer says the government policy is undermining trust in staff and discouraging free speech

ONE year after the government instructed teachers and other school staff to be on the lookout for signs of religious extremism, there are calls for an independent review after some claim it has made no difference.

The Prevent strategy used by the government to prevent home-grown future terrorism saw a push last year for teachers to try and identify anything which could be seen as signs of extremist behaviour or of youngsters being radicalised.

David Anderson QC, is an independent reviewer of terrorism laws. He wrote a submission to the home affairs select committee inquiry into the government's counter-terrorism strategy.

In that he raised concern that elements of Prevent were "ineffective or being applied in an insensitive or discriminatory manner".

He added: "It seems to me that Prevent could benefit from independent review."

He wrote to the committee: "It is perverse that Prevent has become a more significant source of grievance in affected communities than the police and ministerial powers that are exercised... The lack of transparency in the operation of Prevent encourages rumour and mistrust to spread and to fester."

Raheel Mohammed is the director of Maslaha, which is a social enterprise working to improve conditions in Muslim communities, and also demands a review of Prevent in schools, warning of its stigmatising impact,

and calling it a "blunt instrument".

He said: "I don't think what's happening in schools right now would help a teacher to spot signs of extremism."

As well as schools, prisons and councils must also act to stop people becoming radicalised under the new law.

Public bodies have been required to identify and report those vulnerable to extremist views since February last year.

Under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act, schools have to show they are protecting pupils from being led to terrorism by "having robust safeguarding policies in place to identify children at risk, and intervening as appropriate".

It is hoped to protect children from extremist material when accessing the internet.

Even universities have to carry out risk assessments to determine where and how students might be radicalised.

At the time of launch, security minister John Hayes said: "The new Prevent duty is about protecting people from the poisonous and pernicious influence of extremist ideas that are used to legitimise terrorism. Protecting those who are vulnerable and at risk of radicalisation is a job for all of us."

Dr Matthew Jones is lecturer in political science at the University of Greenwich.

At his home in Herne Bay, he told us: "It has been just over one year since the Prevent duty has come into effect as part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. Under this legislation, schools and including universities have a 'duty' to place 'due regard to the need to prevent people



from being drawn into terrorism'.

"On the surface of it, there are merits to this legislation. Teachers, alongside parents and guardians, are the figures that students interact with the most. Teachers are in a unique

North & West

position to notice any unusual changes in behaviour among their students.

"This is already being done in relation to issues such as domestic violence, abuse and neglect, and even fe-

male genital mutilation. In a similar capacity, university provides many students with their first exposure to freedom and new ideas. Part of the teaching role already involves pastoral care and student welfare issues.

"However, this new duty to monitor and report on our students does place teachers and lecturers in a potentially difficult situation. We want our students to trust us and to be able to confide in us if need be. What we do not want is for our students to view us as being an extension of the surveillance apparatus of the state.

"I have heard first hand from university students that they feel they are no longer able to express certain viewpoints in lectures and seminars should academic staff follow through on their Prevent duty and report them. More surprisingly these concerns are being voiced by students who are in no danger of being drawn into terrorism, as is the rationale behind the Prevent duty, but rather students who are simply critical of certain aspect of the current government.

"More worryingly, there is also a fear expressed by some students that other students will report them to the authorities should certain views be openly expressed in class.

"This form of self-censorship is not good, as not only does it hinder dialogue within the classroom environment, but students may develop the views that their opinions are somehow wrong, which is not necessarily the case.

"But there are bigger issues here. Public sector employees want to be seen as serving the public, not spying

Week ending March 20, 2016 **29**

on them. This is not the version of the social contract and public service that most 'front line' public sector employees want to participate in.

"Perhaps more worryingly is the spread of the 'surveillance society'. Our movements can be tracked through the extensive CCTV network that exists in many of our towns and cities.

"After the recent revelations from Edward Snowden, we now know that various governmental bodies monitor and record our online communications. Now there is a legal obligation for various public servants to report on the activities of citizens that the government may deem to be suspicious.

"It is very hard to discuss the idea of citizens watching and reporting on their fellow citizens without drawing analogies to McCarthyist fears of 'reds under the bed' or the Stasi network of citizens turned informants."

John Walder, the divisional secretary in Kent for the National Union of Teachers, slammed it as "unnecessary legislation".

He said: "Whatever teachers do, they need to do it with care and professionally. Launching off into tirades to find a solution to what they perceive as a problem is highly unlikely to be very effective.

"There is certainly a national discussion to be had on how you go about protecting children in school from undue influence.

"That, of course, doesn't just include people who want them to go and fight the Islamic war.

"But also from people who have sexual interest in the children and indeed those who have a financial in-

terest in the children. I think the schools should be there to protect kids, which is what they do already."

Some teachers remain worried about what could happen to their career is they accidentally overlook a normal student in class, who goes on to become a terrorist, consequently potentially breaking the law.

Mr Walder said: "That is one of the features of the modern relationship between the education system and government.

"It wasn't this particular government that started it, in fact it was actually the Labour government of Tony Blair which really started to use a sledgehammer to crack nuts and resort to legislation. It could have easily been dealt with by discussion between schools and the local authority."

A training programme was created by the University of Kent in partnership with Kent Police and Kent County Council called the Zak Simulation, where 'Zak' is a made up at-risk student, and teachers on the course learn how to deal with him.

Those behind Zak, say it is an interactive web-based tool designed to help Prevent delivery partners, teachers, or anyone concerned with the safeguarding of young people.

The National Association of Head Teachers agree. Its vice president, and principal of Bradfields Academy in Medway, is Kim Johnson.

He told us: "At our school, we sometimes find that particular care needs to be taken on behalf of children with autism. This is to make sure that their interests and enquiries don't stray into areas that would be classified as extreme.

In these cases, we've managed the situation well. Parental support is absolutely vital. It's important to help students understand potential vulnerability.

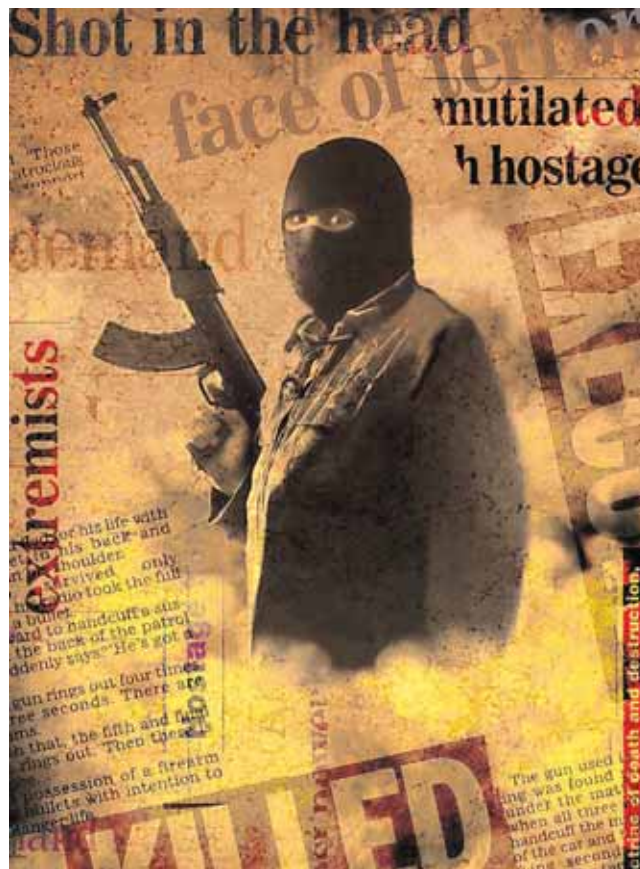
"It is a new dimension for us in protecting our students and clearly a sign of the changing landscape in our duty of care. The challenge remains in getting the balance right between rightful concern and overreaction."

Russell Hobby, general secretary of the NAHT, added: "Training is essential if schools are to fulfil their Prevent duties, but our members consistently tell us that the availability of such training is patchy. This is a new, constantly evolving and highly sensitive domain. Schools want to do the right thing, they recognise the risks, and we need to back them up.

"We're continually working with the Department for Education on what support can be provided to teachers."

Writing for the Radicalisation Research website, Matthew Francis, senior research associate in the department of politics, philosophy and religion at Lancaster University, said: "This idea that we can 'spot radicalisation' also fails to account for research which points out that not all radicals are terrorists, nor are all terrorists radicalised before they join their groups.

"The simple fact is that there is no simple model of 'radicalisation' with easy-to-spot signs. Suggesting otherwise puts an untenable pressure on teachers to recognise something others have found it almost impossible to identify or predict."



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# P b p t b for secondary places

Education consultant and former Gravesend head teacher **Peter Read** takes an in-depth look at the key oversubscription and vacancy situations in grammar and non-selective schools across the county and how it impacts on each of our areas.

**H**IGH vacancy rates, threatening a vicious circle of financial losses, which have led to the closure of four schools in the past three years, need to be tackled by Astor College, Castle Community College, High Weald Academy, New Line Learning, and Swadelands School, all with over a third of their provision empty in Year 7.

Kent has seen an extra 704 places put into its secondary schools above the numbers planned for admission this year, to meet rising rolls in several areas. As a result, the number of pupils offered their first choice rose by 363, and the number being offered none of their four choices fell by 213 children to just 428, the lowest figure for some years. However, this made little difference to the pressure on popu-

lar schools which has never been greater.

## GRAMMAR SCHOOLS

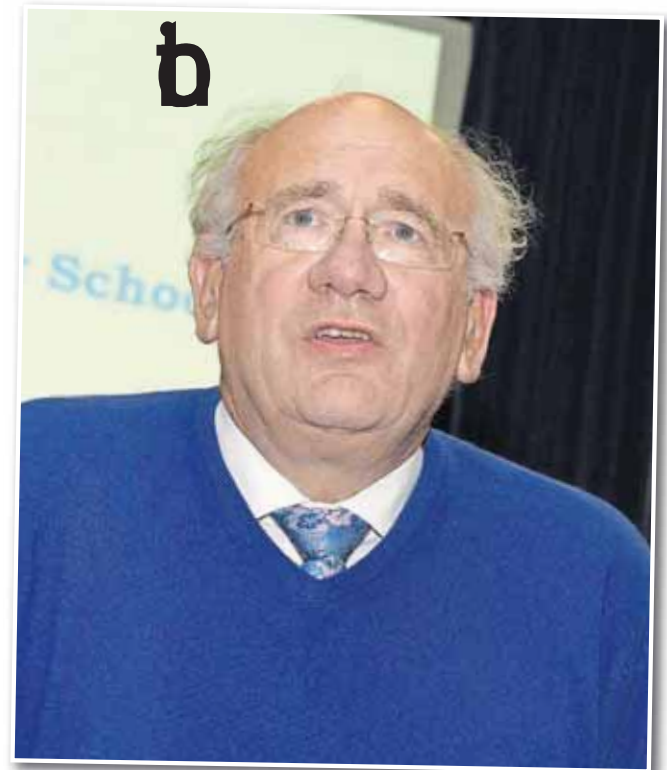
Dartford Grammar School, the most oversubscribed school in the county, turned away 226 grammar qualified pupils soaring up from 127 last year, with 81 of its 150 places going to out of county (OOC) boys. Sadly, because the school has recently introduced a cap of 90 on the number of local boys, places instead going to the highest scorers, many grammar qualified Dartford boys have been rejected from their local school, in spite of protestations when the new system was introduced that this would not happen.

Second most popular grammar school was Tonbridge Grammar with 142 first choices turned away, up from 77 in 2015, followed by Dartford Girls Grammar with 119 up from 95, again

sadly with a number of local girls turned away, but letting in 65 OOC girls, having increased its capacity by an extra 20 girls.

The other two grammar schools in Dartford were also both well oversubscribed, although both changed their admission rules to give priority to Kent children for most of their places, with Wilmington Grammar Boys turning away 49 first choices and the girls grammar 34. The number of OOC boys to Wilmington fell sharply from 91 to 32 as a result of the changes, with Wilmington Girls' falling from 105 to 91.

It was very pleasing to see The Judd in Tonbridge, 97 first choices oversubscribed, has also changed its admission rules to give priority to those living in the locality for all but 20 boys. As a result, the number of Kent chil-



**CONSULTANT:** Peter Read is a former head teacher

dren to be admitted is rising to 141 out of 155, up from 114 in 2015. However, the OOC pressure on Skinners in Tunbridge Wells which has no such rules, increased to compensate up to 45 out

of county boys from 26. Still in west Kent, Weald of Kent Grammar was

**Continued on page 32**

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Continued from page 31

oversubscribed by 33 grammar qualified first choices, even though it has increased its number of places by 55 to 230 girls, in preparation for its expansion into the Sevenoaks annexe next year. The surge in applications to the two Tonbridge Girls' grammars has been very much at the expense of Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Girls.

Other popular grammar schools were: Maidstone Grammar Boys', 38 first choices oversubscribed, although 11 down on 2015, and Sir Roger Manwood's at 32, which had four vacancies last year at this time.

The myth that Kent grammar schools are always oversubscribed is definitely not true, with nine of the 32 having vacancies at this time, although many of the empty desks will fill through appeals. The schools with more than 10 spaces are: Maidstone Grammar for Girls; Chatham & Clarendon; Dover Boys' (following a late increase in admission number of 30); Barton Court; and Borden.

## NON-SELECTIVE SCHOOLS

The district sections below describe the picture on allocation day March 1. Between now and September, many more places will become available after successful grammar school appeals.

### THANET

Most popular non-selective school was St George's CofE Foundation School in Broadstairs, with 161 first choices rejected, just up on last year's 150 when it topped the list for all schools in the county. This is in spite of it being one of the lowest performing schools at GCSE in the county indicating the unpopularity of some of the other choices open to parents.

Thanet is one of a number of districts where there is pressure on places, with just 14 spaces across the six non-selectives at present. However, there is enormous polarisation as fam-

ilies chase the three most popular schools, St George's, King Ethelbert 72 first choices oversubscribed and Charles Dickens 30. At the other end, the new Royal Harbour Academy, which has absorbed the now closed notorious Marlowe Academy, has been allocated 56 children who were not offered any of their choices out of the 196 who were offered places, and Hartsdown Academy with 43 allocations. Between them these two schools have absorbed nearly a quarter of the Kent children with no school of their choice.

### GRAVESHAM

Second most popular non-selective school in Kent is St George's CofE School in Gravesend, with 123 rejected first choices, a giant leap up from last year's 63 when it was 12th in the popularity list.

Gravesham has come under enormous pressure this year, with an additional 76 places being created in three schools, but still leaving just five empty spaces in the borough. Second most popular school here was St John's Catholic Comprehensive, 40 first choices oversubscribed.

### MAIDSTONE

Third most popular school is Valley Park, turning away 116 first choices, even though it has expanded yet again, by 30 places to 270. The only other school significantly oversubscribed is St Simon Stock, Catholic at 36, but two schools appear to be in trouble, New Line Learning, with 96 vacancies for its 210 places, not including 12 local authority allocations, and Swadlands in Lenham that has recently been placed in special measures by Ofsted, with 74 of its 150 places empty.

I hear that Swadlands is to be taken over by Valley Invicta Academy Trust, which is also sponsoring the proposed new six form entry Maidstone School of Science and Technology, although there appear problems here as no news has come out of the

proposal for at least six months and surely construction ought to be beginning soon for a 2017 start. This will pump an additional 180 places into Maidstone which could well finish off one of the two vulnerable schools; ironic if it were to be Swadlands.

### SWALE

The next two most popular schools are in Swale – Fulston Manor and Westlands, oversubscribed by 97 and 91 places respectively, most of the pressure coming from Sheppey as aspiring families seek to avoid the struggling Oasis Isle of Sheppey Academy which, as a result has 65 vacancies even after 53 children were allocated to it who didn't apply there. To be fair, this is Kent's largest secondary school (along with Homewood in Tenterden) with a planned admission number of 390.

### ASHFORD

The Wye Free School, smallest intake in Kent at 90 children, opened three years ago against the will of Kent County Council, but is proving very popular with parents, situated as it is in a lovely rural village, drawing off children from the large Ashford schools, and with 51 children oversubscribed. As a result, The North School, still not recovered from its special measures and take over by Swale Academy Trust, and the Towers School in neighbouring Kennington, are both suffering, with 42 and 67 vacancies respectively. Meanwhile the good and improving John Wallis Academy is now oversubscribed for the first time having shed a previous reputation.

### CANTERBURY

There has been pressure in Canterbury since the closing of Chaucer Technology School two years ago, eased this year by the addition of 70 places in three Canterbury schools. This still leaves no places in any school except struggling Community College Whitstable with 67 vacancies even after 25 local authority allocations of children who did not apply for the

school. Canterbury Academy, Herne Bay and St Anselm's Catholic are the most oversubscribed, with 76, 48 and 46 first choices rejected, respectively.

### DARTFORD

Dartford has been under pressure since the sudden closure of Oasis Hextable Academy last year, with the three schools of the Leigh Academy Trust being collectively oversubscribed by 253 first choices, Leigh Academy having been the most popular school in Kent for some years. Three years ago it accounted for 235 first choices rejected on its own; but this year, the academy's popularity has waned considerably, with Wilmington Academy looking the most popular, having added 40 places to its previous 200, and still being 27 oversubscribed (but 94 in 2015); Leigh Academy itself turning away 49 first choices.

### DOVER

This comes at the other end of the scale, with Dover district having a quarter of its places empty and just one school oversubscribed, Sandwich Technology at 77 first choices turned away. Many of those rejected will be families unable to secure schools in Canterbury, or trying to flee unpopular schools in Thanet and Deal. Most vacancies occur at Astor College, 86 and at Castle Community College, Deal - 68, which has had a torrid time since its fall from grace as an outstanding school just three years ago, straight into special measures.

### SEVENOAKS

As with Wye Free School, the Trinity School, opened at the same time, has proved hugely popular with parents and is about to transfer into new buildings, being 51 first choices oversubscribed for its 120 places. It competes with the much larger Knole Academy, also very popular, being 67 first choices oversubscribed, attracting 35 children from across the county boundary in Bromley.

### SHEPWAY

The proposed closure of Pent Valley

School this summer has been alleviated by 57 new places being opened at Brockhill Park and Folkestone Academy, although 34 children have still applied for and been offered places at Pent Valley, who will now need to be allocated elsewhere. School of choice is Brockhill, with 62 disappointed first choices. Folkestone Academy, until recently one of the most popular schools in Kent, just filling.

### TUNBRIDGE WELLS

All three schools in the town remain oversubscribed, in spite of a collective injection of 106 additional places, St Gregory's turning away 34 first choices. Some 47 of Bennett's places go to children from East Sussex. The three rural schools in the district all have vacancies, the high performing High Weald still having half its 150 places empty, despite having reduced from 180 in 2015.

### OTHER SCHOOLS

Holmesdale Community College in Snodland is as usual the school with the largest OOC contingent, attracting 41 children from Medway, but still has 47 empty spaces.

Two of Kent's highest performing schools at GCSE, Hayesbrook and High Weald Academy in Cranbrook, are far less successful at attracting students, with 84 and 75 vacancies respectively, both with an admission number of 150.

### OUT OF COUNTY

As always, there was much media publicity for the 803 out of county children taking up places in Kent schools, many of which are identified above. There is never notice of the 460 going out of Kent to other local authorities.

These include 165 to grammar schools in Medway, Bexley and Bromley, and 78 to the four large neighbouring comprehensive schools in East Sussex.

**For more information on this and a host of key education topics in Kent, see Peter Read's website – [www.kentadvice.co.uk](http://www.kentadvice.co.uk).**







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# Relentless march of the academies

But as more and more change status is the academy system genuinely working for our young generation?

By Molly Kersey-Law  
molly.kersy-law@archant.co.uk

**F**IRST it was a trickle, now it is approaching a flood; the relentless wave of the academy is now close to washing completely over the county.

Today, around four fifths of Kent's secondaries have moved to academy status – many by choice, some pressured to do so.

But is the academy system working? Originally seen as an ambitious method of breathing new life into schools in deprived areas when conceived by Tony Blair's Labour government in 2000, it is today a very different beast.

Where once it was seen as something of a hybrid; combining a state school with commercial expertise and funding and more autonomy, today it has ceased being the exceptional to almost being the rule.

Just this week, chancellor George Osborne said all schools – primary and secondary should become academies by 2020 or have concrete plans to do so by 2022. Those waves breaking on the beach will soon become an ocean.

But while once many schools leapt into their arms to embrace more control those early converters were

promised – the power to break salary guidelines, shift school hours and benefit from sponsor investment – today the squeeze on education funding has meant they struggle too.

Roger Gough is Kent County Council's cabinet member for education. He explained: "The very first academies were targeted at a very small number of schools in very deprived areas with poor results.

"Since then, we have had some which didn't work out and some such as the Skinners' Kent Academy in Tunbridge Wells which have been a considerable success.

"We had a real take-off in terms of numbers when Michael Gove's changes came in [broadening it from the original concept] that tending to be high-performing secondary schools, if you had good or outstanding ratings you had the option to convert."

Today, all schools must become an academies.

But in this significant shift in direction, has the original benefit of making the transformation been diluted?

Alasdair Smith is the national secretary of the Anti Academies Alliance. And as the name suggests, he believes what was once an experiment is now significantly undermine



**SUCCESS:** New buildings and a fresh ethos allowed the phoenix rising from the flames of Tunbridge Wells High School, the Skinners Academy to flourish. But is its success a rare case of academy status genuinely delivering a real turn around, or was it just a well executed transformation of the previous struggling school's leadership? Right, Michael Gove's changes signalled a tidal wave in schools seeking academy status.

the nation's education system.

"There's no such thing as an academy," he explains. "These are schools that have been partially privatised.

Money is spent converting the schools, but none of that money is going to improve the education of the kids.

"I think it's disingenuous of the

government to say that inadequate schools should become academies, when so many academies are themselves inadequate.



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"Turning a school into an academy does not make it a good school, end of story. They believe there's this magic dust called academy status, sprinkle it on a school and it gets better, which is totally dishonest. The only thing that improves a school is improving the quality of the teaching, learning and leadership.

"There's not a single piece of evidence that shows that academy status improves a school. It's a farce. What do you do with an academy that's failing, turn it into an academy? At some point in the future we are going to have to pick up the pieces."

Mike O'Brien, is portfolio holder for

children's services at Medway Council. He believes resistance is futile.

"It's no good being like King Canute and sitting in front of the ocean trying to stop the waves," he says. "Academisation is happening and will happen. I would encourage head teachers and governors to be looking around at the multi academy trusts that are on offer at the moment rather than waiting for the government to impose one."

The county has certainly had a chequered history when it comes to academies. There can be no denying the success of Skinners Kent Academy, which replaced Tunbridge Wells

High School in 2009. Last year's GCSE figures saw 56 per cent of pupils pass the benchmark five GCSEs A\*-C with English and maths; comfortably above the 40 per cent expected level, a new high in a constant series of improvements year-on-year.

"The pupils want to be there and that has come from parents buying into the vision of the sponsor and principal," explained Tony Wilson, education officer at The Skinners' Company, one of the school's sponsors.

This is in sharp contrast to the Marlowe Academy in Ramsgate. Seen as a beacon of the original academy strategy, it opened in 2005 in £30m

of new buildings and the backing of local billionaire Sir Roger de Haan. But it failed to ever improve, constantly being one of the lowest rated in the country. It was merged with nearby Ellington and Hereson, and re-named the Royal Harbour Academy at the end of the last academic year.

It is now set to become part of the Coastal Academies Trust. Paul Luxmoore, director of the trust, insisted results will get better: "But it will take time. It takes more than a year to have a significant impact."

Which will come as little comfort to students and parents there now.

"All schools will become academies

in the future," adds Mr Luxmoore. "Both the Conservative and Labour government said they wanted a 'school-led self-sustaining system'."

But what of the role of sponsors? Skinners Company's Tony Wilson says it is more important now than ever. He explained: "Tight funding regimes and the requirement for rapid improvement make it very hard for stand-alone academy trusts to function with an economy of scale."

"The new landscape is much more about clusters of academies calling on each other, with the sponsor at the nexus, to find out what works and be very agile to adopt new practices. This systemic role used to be played by the local authority alone but the academy programme has made it difficult for the local authority now."

KCC's Roger Gough agrees, he said: "They can provide a variety of opportunities for staff, you can move across different parts of the organisation and they can have their own capacity to support different schools. They can become quite strong organisations. There is a danger for a school on their own that they could become isolated to a degree."

A spokesperson for the Department for Education said: "Academies are providing thousands of pupils with an excellent education, and all schools deserve the opportunity to enjoy the freedoms academy status brings."

"There are now 1.4m more pupils being taught in 'good' or 'outstanding' schools compared with 2010."

"The most effective way of bringing about rapid and sustained improvement is to become an academy with the support of a strong sponsor."



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# Colleges generating revenues in bid to boost students and balance books

From restaurants to salons and even a fully-fledged hotel, how further education is investing talent wisely

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

**A**S SIXTH form teachers went on strike earlier this week over funding cuts, the importance of further education colleges finding revenue from elsewhere has never been more topical.

There appears to be a growing trend across the county with education becoming more commercialised, as colleges look to introduce revenue-generating elements to help keep budgets topped up.

Hadlow College, near Tonbridge, boasts modern facilities and undertakes a range of commercial activities to help its revenue streams, and provide students with experiences to equip them for the varied world of work.

It runs both a tea room and florist.

Spokesperson Pat Crawford said: "The college is unique because one third of its income comes from these commercial projects, and I think it's provided the blueprint for the rest of the county to follow."

"We've come off a background of successive funding cuts, so for a college to be successful it needs to be as independent as possible."

"Hadlow has one of the lowest dependencies on public funding in the country."

"We have a range of facilities that we let out – conference and meeting rooms, for example, in all different sizes to meet particular needs."

"The students benefit from the commercial projects because the income raised is utilised to enhance the student experience in a variety of

ways, particularly the experience and transferable skills they gain.

"If you've got this kind of business experience on your CV, you are going into the industry in really good stead – if you've worked in the garden centre and done a degree in horticulture, that gives you a real edge if you want to go into nursery management, for example."

"We like to look at it as Hadlow providing a 360-degree experience, so it's beneficial all around, not just in terms of income."

The Hadlow group also runs West Kent College and Ashford College, and Mark Lumsdon-Taylor, director of finance and resources, agreed that it was blazing a trail.

He said: "West Kent College has a developing portfolio of commercial offers, including a fine dining restaurant, The View, and industry-standard hair salons and arts theatres, including venue hire."

"They are much more than commercial projects – they are businesses, and form part of the whole philosophy behind the Hadlow Group."

"Everything we do commercially has to support education, growth and innovation and our commercial businesses are all tasked with profitability targets."

"Our strategy is based upon a fiscal rule of a balanced structure of income and profitability from further education, higher education and commercial businesses. This was instituted in 2002 and remains as robust now as then."

"Our group businesses all use local suppliers as part of the fiscal rules, supporting the community and reducing our carbon footprint."

"We place great importance on every element of our business model being sustainable."

"In 2013, we conducted an independent economic and social impact assessment which concluded that for every £1 we spent, £2.60 was generated for the Kent economy."

Similarly, East Kent College is involved with a host of projects, including a restaurant in Broadstairs and its most ambitious project yet – a hotel.

Principal Graham Razey said: "The college undertakes a wide range of commercial activities, from our Viking Bay Fine Foods to our new training hotel The Yarrow which is due to open this summer."

"It's great for our students to get the experience of undertaking real life, live commercial projects."

"Their learning is enriched when they get the opportunity to work on proper business projects, as they get to understand just how important things like deadlines are in a business place."

"It's much the same experience they get when in the real world of work, and it ensures they get greater employability skills which will help



**OPPORTUNITIES:** Colleges across the county have a range of commercial projects available to students, from restaurants to digital media schemes



**VIEW:** West Kent College's fine dining experience



improve their chances of finding a job when they leave.

"The commercial activities we undertake also have the benefit of complementing local economies."

"In Folkestone, which is a growing hub of digital and creative sector businesses, we opened The Edge School of Creative and Business. It acts like a digital media agency, taking on real business projects from real companies."

"Students are expected to help pitch for work, draw up timelines for projects and then undertake them alongside their studies."

"The Edge has taken on some wonderful projects, and it has given the students a boost when they finish at college and continue into the booming creative sector in Folkestone."

David Glead, principal of North Kent College and member of Kent Further Education, the body which champions

the sector in Kent and Medway, says this new direction is here to stay.

He explained: "We run two nurseries, four salons and a restaurant. However, none of them are run to make a commercial profit but are there to support our students as an integral part of the learning experience."

Simon Cook, principal of Mid Kent College, added: "These are important skills required by a whole range of businesses across the region."



# Kent sighs with relief as secondary school places are finally announced



Across the country, parents and children will have been opening letters and emails on 1st March in eager anticipation, wondering which secondary school they had been allocated. Luckily, in Kent, 8 out of 10 year 6 children were given their first choice in 2015. Sources at KCC say that the figure should be similar this year.

Whilst year 6 is a difficult year for parents and students, with the stress of the Kent Test and choosing the right secondary school, it is also an opportunity to really think about what kind of secondary school environment they are looking for. Is their child sporty or good at art, or music, or drama? Maybe they are more academic and would benefit from a curriculum that emphasises maths, science and other traditional subjects. Possibly 'all of the above' would apply. We are fortunate in this area of Kent that there is a wide range of excellent schools to choose from.

One such school is Knole Academy, based in Sevenoaks. This is an 11 to 18 school

with its own theatre, two all-weather pitches, a recording studio, 11 science laboratories and a grammar stream which attracts many students who have passed the Kent Test. Knole Academy has a good academic record, with students last year making above expected progress. Alice is now in year 11, and expected to achieve two A\*s, two As, a B and four C grades, which is well above the grades she was expected to achieve when she started with Knole in year 7. She says, "I feel really confident about sitting my exams thanks to all the revision sessions after school and in the holidays." Grace, who is in year 10, agrees with this. She says, "Knole Academy has helped me to improve by giving me more opportunities, both social and academic."

Good schools know how to engage students and how to motivate each individual. Good schools offer extra-curricular opportunities that allow students to develop skills and confidence. Lewis, a year 10 student at Knole,

says, "I have been able to excel in sound and lighting engineering, which could be a potential career for me". Imi and Georgia, two year 11 students add, "Knole Academy is filled with opportunities; we have been on trips abroad and completed our bronze Duke of Edinburgh."

In today's competitive and uncertain environment, parents and students have also got an eye on what happens after school, whether that be a university place, an apprenticeship or straight into work. Knole has an excellent track record in ensuring that students have the skills they need for life-long success. Eden, who is currently in year 12, comments, "Knole has given me the ability to be a confident, independent thinker. It's given me a good foundation to make me successful in higher education."

However, none of this can detract from the anxiety that many young people, and their parents, will feel as the children put on their school uniform in September and

step out on the start of their secondary school journey. Parents can be reassured that a child in the Knole uniform will have already visited the school, for induction day, and had an opportunity to go to summer school. However, you don't need to take my word for it; Lucy, who is in year 7 says, "I was a bit worried at first but have made new friends not only in year 7 but with the older students. I've had the chance to represent the school in netball, handball, cricket, football, trampolining and gymnastics. I am especially enjoying art and maths. I started to learn the saxophone in September and expect to take my grade 3 exam this summer".



## Knole Academy Dates for your diary

- Open Evening – 22 September 2016, 6pm – 9pm
- Academy Open Morning – 3 October 2016
- Academy Open Morning – 11 October 2016
- Grammar Stream Open Morning – 17 October 2016
- Grammar Stream Information Evening 18 October 2016
- Expressive Arts Aptitude Test – 11 October 2016, 4.30pm

Knole in a nutshell	Knole Academy	National Comparison
Average capped grade per student	C	C-
Value added (NB 1000 is neutral, above 1000 is good)	1005	999
High attaining students 5A* to C including English and Maths	94%	90%
A level A* – B results	55%	Not available
A level A* – E results	99%	Not available

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Friday 6th May 1.30pm – 4pm  
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# Boys still left out in the cold at Sevenoaks grammar site

Any hope of adding a boys' element to the controversial annexe seems more distant than ever due to the legislation in place over expansion of selective schools

By Luke May

luke.may@archant.co.uk

**W**HEN the government gave the go-ahead for a grammar 'annexe' to be built in Sevenoaks, it opened up not so much a can of worms but a bulging

barrel of political snakes. Was education secretary Nicky Morgan firing the starting gun on a new generation of grammar schools; overturning the ban introduced by the Tony Blair government preventing the creation of any more? The pro and anti selective brigades issued their clarion calls and the arguments exploded across



**FUTURE:** These two images reveal how the Weald of Kent grammar annex in Sevenoaks will eventually look, once it is open for business in September 2017. The chair of governors has ruled out moving into temporary buildings prior to the main multi-million pound buildings being ready to take the first intake of pupils.

the national media.

For the parents and pupils of the west Kent town it was the end of a lengthy battle to establish a selective and end the trek to schools in Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells. An un-

derstandable demand.

But the decision was far from perfect. Most significantly because it would benefit only girls.

Original efforts for a mixed annexe were shot down – a revised bid from a

girls only grammar for a girls only annexe unblocked the problem and the green light was given.

Yet for the boys there was no resolution. And, it seems, there is little light on the horizon.

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Education advisor and former headteacher Peter Read says trying to force that through may just prove mission impossible - not only due to the political sensitivities but because of the need of a suitable parent school.

He told us: "Under the current rules it's very difficult to open an annexe, it works in Tonbridge and Sevenoaks for Weald of Kent as they take stu-

dents from both areas. Invicta Grammar in Maidstone's application was rejected because you've got to have the same criteria."

Invicta was originally selected as the parent of the annexe - but as a girls' only grammar its bid for a co-ed selective in Sevenoaks was rejected by the then education secretary Michael Gove.

It was not, however, ruled out per se. And that allowed the Weald of Kent in Tonbridge to emerge in its place.

Before putting forward its proposals, it attempted to change its admissions procedure - polling parents over whether it should start accepting both boys and girls. It was overwhelmingly rejected, however.

And it has no plans to push for a

vote anytime soon.

Chair of governors at the girls' grammar, David Bower, said: "Following the first rejection we're not planning to change that and KCC hasn't asked us to do; we've got enough on our plate getting the school ready for next year."

"To work, the annexe has to have the same application criteria running under the same rules as the parent school," explains Peter Read.

"To find a boys' grammar school in Sevenoaks is difficult. The legislation would have to change in my view, and the only people who can make that change are the government."

Kent County Council, which championed the Sevenoaks grammar, remained tight-lipped this week on any fresh push for a boys' school.

Certainly it would be hard to imagine just where it could go geographically.

The annexe is to be sited on what was once the Wildernes School in Sevenoaks - a boys' only high school which merged with Bradbourne to create the Knole Academy, moving out of its traditional home in the process.

With the Weald annexe taking over part of the site, free school The Trinity School will open its £19m new buildings in September.

Assuming work on the site for the annexe goes to plan they will be accepting their first forms of girls from the start of the academic year in September 2017.

A KCC spokesman said: "Once the secretary of state for education approved the application, opponents had three months to object officially to her decision.

"This deadline expired on January

14. As there were no objections, KCC - in cooperation with the Weald of Kent Grammar - has been progressing the physical plans so the school can open for certain year groups from September next year."

Sarah Shilling spearheaded the campaign for a Sevenoaks grammar. But her frustration continues at the lack of a boys' facility.

She said: "It is exciting to see a grammar annexe opening, but at the same time it's ridiculous that we can't just open a new grammar school.

"Historically, it's the boys that have the greater demand for grammar school places in the area, so whilst it's great the girls have one; it's not really where the issue was.

"There are girls in my youngest son's class who will have that opportunity to go to a local grammar annexe while my son might have to travel. It's almost sexual discrimination.

"I realise grammar schools are unpopular, but we aren't asking to roll them out across the country. In Kent we have grammar schools so we need accessibility for students and to cope with the lack of school places in the existing schools."

Traditionally the biggest strain on secondary school places comes in the west of the county - due mainly to their proximity to the London boroughs and neighbouring counties.

As for the work on the site, so far it has yet to begin.

Chair of governors David Bower dismissed the idea of starting the annexe in temporary buildings: "We're all working hard to meet that deadline for September 2017 and I can imagine work will begin in the not too distant future."

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# Story of VC hero's courageous last stand goes online

William Cotter received the highest possible honour for his bravery during the First World War. Now his story will live on for future generations thanks to the National Army Museum

By Chris Murphy

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

ONE of the nation's most highly awarded war heroes is to be remembered almost exactly 100 years after his death.

William Cotter, who grew up near Folkestone, was awarded the Victoria Cross – the highest military award for valour in the face of the enemy – for a remarkable act of heroism during the First World War.

He suffered horrific injuries during a battle in which he helped fend off a German assault.

But, tragically, he was to ultimately die from his injuries just days later.

And to ensure his bravery lives on, his story is to be published online for the first time by the National Army Museum.

The museum's own moving tribute to Lance Corporal Cotter also includes a remarkable personal letter of condolence from King George V.

Cotter held his position for two hours after having his leg blown off at the knee. He died of his injuries almost a week later.



**HERO:** William Cotter

Born in Folkestone, he became an icon for the town's history buffs.

Peter Bamford, from the Folkestone and District Local History Society, explained: "Lance Corporal Cotter thoroughly deserved his VC.

"He showed astonishing courage in a way most men just would not have been able to function.

"We all know the horrors of the First World War and this man epitomised the stories of heroes that came out of the conflict. He suffered appalling in-

juries and yet his first thought was for the other men under his command.

"To be able to sustain his strength at all in those circumstances is beyond belief and for him to then take command of the situation and organise the soldiers around him saving their lives is simply astonishing.

"Most men would like to think they could cope under such situations, but the truth is only a few genuinely can.

"And it is for all those reasons that Lance Corporal William Richard Cotter has gone down in history as one of Britain's bravest.

"Being under fire is harrowing enough, but to suffer those devastating injuries and still carry on beggars belief.

"We are proud he came from Folkestone and Sandgate and that he has been remembered 100 years on, long may he be an inspiration to us all to battle on and overcome all sorts of adversities."

Dr Peter Johnston, collections content team leader and manager at the National Army Museum, added: "This story is a dramatic reminder of the courage soldiers demonstrated every day during the First World War. The Victoria Cross is the highest military award for bravery so that the King himself wrote a letter of condolence to Cotter's family shows just how remarkable his act of bravery was."

The museum said the King's letter and photographs of Cotter are being released online for the first time, along with Cotter's story, on the National Army Museum's online portal.

The museum dug deep into the soldier's history.

It said his unit went into action in March 1916 to capture critical German defensive position in France. The corporal "cheerily" held his position for two hours despite his leg having been blown off at the knee, and later, on March 28, the London Gazette reported: "There is no doubt that his magnificent courage helped greatly to save a critical situation."

Cotter was the eldest of six sons of Richard and Amy Cotter, of Barton Cottages, Sandgate.

His father was Irish and worked as a plasterer's labourer.

He joined the 1st Battalion The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) in 1902 and gave his trade as labourer, going on to serve in India, Aden, England and Ireland before being discharged to the Reserve in February 1914.

However, he ended up with the 6th (Service) Battalion The Buffs, part of 37th Brigade when war started.

North & West



**TRAGIC:** Hero was lost a week after his heroics saved the lives of many

He was accepted into the ranks despite having lost sight in his right eye following a punch-up in a Dover pub. His five younger brothers also signed up for the army and navy.

The details of the incident makes for grim reading.

In details supplied by the museum, Lance Corporal Cotter has been in action at the Hohenzollern Redoubt, a German defensive stronghold near Auchy-les-Mines on the Loos front.

As the front lines moved to and fro, the building had repeatedly swapped hands, but in March, possession was, incredibly, shared – British on the west, Germans the east.

Parts of the redoubt, including Triangle Crater, gave the Germans an unobstructed view into British trenches on to which they could direct artillery fire and target mining operations.

It became obvious the Germans needed to be moved from his key position.

Cotter's unit went into action at Triangle Crater on March 5 and were immediately counter-attacked but, with the help of their divisional artillery, were able to resist.

The report told of how Cotter made his way to the crater unaided despite having lost part of his leg and being wounded in both arms. He "steadied the men... controlled their fire, issued orders, and altered the dispositions of his men to meet a fresh counter-attack."

He held his position for two hours, only allowing his wounds to be dressed when the attack had died down.

Although the British troops secured most of their gains, subsequent German counter-attacks eventually forced them back.

Cotter lived long enough to know that he had been successfully recommended for the VC and the medal was

pinned to his chest while he lay in hospital at Lillers.

His injuries were just too bad and he died on March 14, 1916, aged 33 and is buried at Lillers Communal Cemetery near Bethune.

Peter Johnston, from the museum, added: "This is about the courage ordinary soldiers demonstrated every day during the conflict. Despite losing part of his leg and suffering injuries to both arms, Cotter continued to fight with little consideration for his injuries. It took 14 hours before he could be moved back to safety, and he later died in hospital of his wounds.

"His story, as well as the other letters and diaries held in the National Army Museum Collection, allows us to witness these extraordinary stories from the Great War through the eyes of the soldiers who endured it."

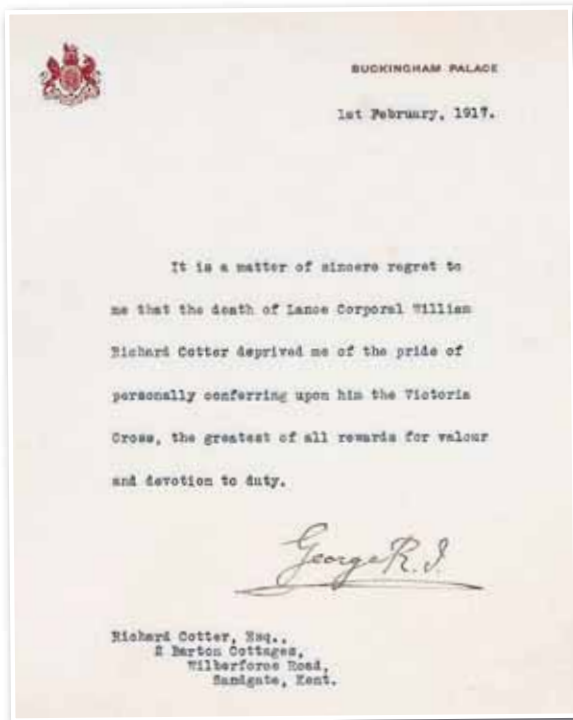
Lance Corporal Cotter was one of 159 soldiers posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross during the First World War, for bravery in action and is commemorated on a memorial tablet in the entrance lobby of the Chichester Hall, Sandgate, and on the village war memorial.

The museum said: "Such personal accounts are being unveiled each month in the Soldiers' Stories series. They piece together the development of the war from the point of view of those directly involved – one hundred years from the time that they describe.

"An interactive global map also features on the portal, which geo-tags all the major events of the war, as well as a timeline to help users piece together the development of the conflict and a host of learning tools. The website is a unique resource that will help commit the events of one hundred years ago to the country's national memory in one central place."

■ The National Army Museum website is at [www.nam.ac.uk](http://www.nam.ac.uk).

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**HONOUR:** Letter from King George V to the Cotter's family

[kentnews.co.uk](http://kentnews.co.uk) [kent-life.co.uk](http://kent-life.co.uk)

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mrrp £2,185 now £1,095 each

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~~"BOND" 3 seater sofa & chair~~

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Penshurst corner wardrobe system by Lawrence Walsh

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Stratford two door wardrobe by Lawrence Walsh

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Stratford two door wardrobe with additional shelf unit

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# Caught on camera: Unpublished photos of The Beatles' producer

Following the death of the legendary music producer Sir George Martin, celebrated photographer **John Stewart Farrier** provides Kent on Sunday with a selection of previously unseen photographs and his memory of his time back in 1984 in the company of the man known as the 'fifth Beatle'...

**I**HAVE really fond memories of this encounter with one of my musical heroes. An air of magic surrounded this master of sounds.

A photographic session usually takes around 30 minutes but on this occasion the assignment became exceptional as I was soon to discover.

Having made my way to the Air Studios London office for a 10am appointment, I was met by Sir George Martin's secretary – Shirley.

With pleasant introductions over, I was led into an impressive back room office and music room.

And there was the master of all record producers behind his office desk – on the phone arranging studio dates in his diary. I could not help over-hearing a snippet of the conversation – it was with Paul McCartney – I was directed to sit on a brown sofa and then discretely opened my camera case, taking out the Nikon and simply began to photograph George – capturing his smiles.

"So you want to photograph me," were his opening words after putting down the phone. "Yes," I replied. "Well you've started I see, so let's go over what I do first."

Then began one of the most exciting photographic sessions I have ever had. A complete overture on all about George Martin which culminated in: "I don't work behind an office desk so let's go down to the studio."

We ended up in Studio One at Air Studios and he began talking about the recording console process and who had been using the studio the previous week – Dire Straits. Photographs taken by Linda McCartney were hanging from the walls of various musicians, including Paul – a nice touch to the studio atmosphere.

There was a lovely calmness about George that was infectious when you met him – you instantly knew that he was in control of his surroundings and somehow made you feel very welcomed.

He began talking about the constant developments within the music business and the musicians' demands for new sounds and new effects for their music each time they enter the studio. He explained: "We are constantly creating, to be in front of the game, which became evident when producing The Beatles."

"What became a defining moment with them?" I asked.

He replied: "John, there were many defining moments with those four musicians but everyone recognises Sergeant Pepper as a landmark. It's all in the sound, you know, and that recording is



still very refreshing to listen to – lovely memories for me."

And then a smile began to appear on George's face followed by a gentle nod of satisfaction, or was it pride?

After a short while, we agreed to break for tea and biscuits to the musicians' snooker lounge and then he talked about the project just completed with Paul McCartney – Give My Regards to Broad Street – with all the musical challenges that applied to recording – simply magical.

I glanced at my watch – more than four hours had flashed past – only three frames left in the camera – no more film! I had taken nine rolls during the sessions. I arranged to see him again to go over the photo proofs to select the prints required and soon after, departed.

Ten days later I met George again at Air Studios with a selection of 12 x 16 inch photographs for his review and final selection. He proceeded to sign all the photographs, but one became very important to me and it said, "This was a special day and this is a happy print – thanks from George Martin".

The exclusive photographs shown here were selected by George and are currently in his private collection at Air Studios.



**HERO:** Photographer John Stewart Farrier (left) spent some four hours in the company of legendary record producer Sir George Martin at his studio in London back in the mid 1980s.

North & West

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## Upholstery – Sofas & Chairs

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Toronto corner group sofa with integral sofa bed & storage!  
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was £5,690	now £1,125	ONLY ONE!	80%
was £1,549	now £750	ONLY ONE!	51%
was £1,499	now £695	ONLY ONE!	53%
was £1,434	now £845	ONLY ONE!	41%
was £1,790	now £695	ONLY ONE!	61%

## Lounge & Dining Room Furniture

~~Gola Bergen 3 seater sofa & 3 drawer sideboard. Slight damage~~ **SOLD**  
Content by Conran. Walnut coffee table  
Skovby oiled oak large extending dining table & 4 chairs  
Gola bergen Oval extending table & 4 chairs  
Gola reproduction Mahogany pedestal dining table 4 chairs & 2 carvers  
Corndell Tavistock glass door solid Ash display cabinet  
Cirrus solid oak lamp table

was £1,259	now £199	ONLY ONE!	80%
was £499	now £175	ONLY ONE!	64%
was £3,500	now £1,195	ONLY ONE!	65%
was £2,505	now £1,195	ONLY ONE!	52%
was £3,840	now £1,875	ONLY ONE!	51%
was £885	now £350	ONLY ONE!	60%
was £462	now £85	ONLY ONE!	80%

## Beds & Bedroom Furniture

Pocket 1000 2'6" shallow divan set  
Nolte corner wardrobe system. Fantastic quality  
Myers Leo 4'6" 2 drawer pocket sprung set  
~~4'6" clearance bed & dresser~~ **SOLD**  
San Francisco Bay triple box white wardrobe  
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San Francisco Bay dressing table

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**ANTHEMS:** Katie Paine said that there is 'something for everyone' in the show

## Rock anthems galore in a 'foot-stomping' production

**Molly Kersey-Law** spoke to performer Katie Paine about her role in the show...

**A** MUSICAL show will be bringing a number of 'foot-stomping' rock anthems to Bromley next month.

One Night of Rock features the music of iconic artists such as The Rolling Stones, Bon Jovi, Aerosmith, Queen, Led Zeppelin and Guns n Roses.

Some 48 songs are included in the show, with renditions of Born to be Wild, Walk This Way, Layla and (I Can't Get No) Satisfaction.

Show producer Michael Taylor explained: "One Night of Rock will have music fans rocking in the aisles as it takes them on a two-hour trip back in time to the glory days of live rock anthems."

Katie Paine will be performing in the show.

She said: "We start rocking right from the word go. The first act goes

through a little eighties rock section and the second act is a little more about rock ballads.

"There are four vocalists, two male and two female. We are the only voices on stage and we have a band behind us called Joan ov Arc - they are an all-female band."

As well as singing a number of ensemble pieces, Ms Paine also has the chance to perform some solos in the show.

"I get to sing fabulous songs in act two. I sing Total Eclipse of the Heart by Bonnie Tyler. It's great to sing and I get very emotional with it. It's just a brilliant track, particularly with the band behind you," she explained.

"I sing Sweet Child of Mine. The audience jump on their feet and dance with me and I feel like a little bit of a rock star."

"Towards the end we sing Bohe-

mian Rhapsody and that's very special."

And she added that many people would enjoy what the production had to offer.

"I think there's something for everyone," she explained.

"There are certain songs like Eye of the Tiger and Satisfaction and Jump. We don't do all of them, we do snippets of them."

"As soon as they come on you know that the audience are with you all the way, there's the immediate response of 'oh I love this one'."

"It's very, very upbeat."

"You will definitely be on your feet dancing by the end and singing along."

Ms Paine knew that she wanted to perform from a very young age.

"I used to sing around the living room, myself and my sister would put on shows and used to perform

them on Boxing Day with my younger cousins," she said.

"After drama school I knew I wanted to do it seriously."

"I did a couple of cruise ship jobs and some theatre."

"My dream was to perform in the West End and I was in We Will Rock You - I was in the last cast and in it until it closed."

One Night of Rock will be performed at the Churchill Theatre on April 21.

"This is our first time in Bromley. We do a lot of gigs up north, it's nice to come back south," said Ms Paine.

The performance will be starting at 7.30pm.

Tickets are £25.50 or £23.50 with concessions.

For more information or to book you can visit [www.churchilltheatre.co.uk](http://www.churchilltheatre.co.uk) or alternatively call the box office on 0203 285 6000.

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# Can Dental Implants make you walk tall?

We believe the answer is Yes... Hear Mike's story to see how his confidence improved after having dental implants...!

We seem to have accepted the gradual loss of our teeth as a natural part of growing old. The same could be said for getting a denture...that's the next stage, isn't it? Just because our parents and grandparents settled for early tooth loss and a plastic denture does not mean we have too?

## Meet The Expert

Pieter Claassen BChD, MsC (implant Dentistry) has joined Hanover House Dentistry (pictured) completed his Masters in dental implants from Warwick University, with merit, and has been doing dental implants for over 12 years now. Having qualified as a dentist in 1999, Pieter has experience in a vast range of dental treatments, and is still passionate about delivering life-transforming dental implants.



## Mike's Story

Mike Jones from Kent is a typical example. He is a teacher at a very prestigious boys' school. Working with children requires an iron will and you can't afford to leave any weaknesses open for teasing.

Over the years, through no fault of his own, Mike lost many teeth having each one added to his denture. With each tooth that was lost so was the bone lost around the natural tooth. Mike was looking for a new solution; he didn't want to wear a denture! He visited his local dentist to enquire about dental implants and was referred to a London training hospital for an assessment. The hospital concluded that Mike has lost so much bone that he would not be a suitable candidate for dental implants. This was a real low point for Mike, he was destined to live a life wearing ill-fitting dentures that caused pain and discomfort and looked unsightly too.

## Loss Of Courage

Tooth loss causes people to change what they eat, basing their choices around soups or other soft foods. Whatever food they chose invariably ends up under the dentures and can irritate the gums unless it is cleaned shortly after eating which can lead to awkward, embarrassing moments. In some cases people stop living, they stop dating because of the fear that a new partner will find out that they wear a denture. This has a huge effect on social lives and confidence often leading to depression.

## It's A Success

He started to re-arrange the layout of his classroom so that the desks were

further away from him when he was teaching.

His confidence was at an all time low, it had even started to effect his posture, so much that he started hunching over. Years later he made an appointment to see a new dentist, Dr Pieter Claassen, at Hanover House Dental. Dr Claassen took one look at Mike's dentures and said something Mike had been waiting to hear for years, I have a solution! Pieter believed there was still enough bone to allow dental implant placement.. Mike had a 3D X-ray taken of both his jaws. The X-ray was imported into specialist software which Pieter used to simulate implant placement. Good news: there was enough bone available.

Mike underwent the simple procedure of dental implant placement. The implants were placed which now holds the denture in place so it doesn't move, he can eat and it will never fall out! Teeth in one day!

Approximately three-months after the placement, impressions will be taken for the new teeth to be constructed and securely fitted to the new implants.

## Common Problems For Denture Wearers

- Not being able to eat what you want
- Having to use fixative several times a day which is difficult to remove from your denture
- Your confidence has dropped
- You don't enjoy food anymore because of the denture covering the roof of your mouth
- You find yourself talking with your hand in front of your mouth to either stop a loose denture from moving or to hide an embarrassing gap



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- When did you last smile?
- You no longer join in for photos or when you do you stand at the back

## Dreams Come True

During the treatment, Pieter commented to his nurse that Mike would regain so much confidence that he will start to walk taller.

During one of his review appointments, Mike coincidentally said he feels so much taller now.

His new teeth have breed a new confidence that has encouraged him to take up his dream of learning Spanish. Mike studied the language in Spain for three months in an intimate classroom environment.

Fixed non-removable teeth are also an option for those in Mike's position.

This enriching experience prompted Pieter to develop a challenge: If you cannot eat a piece of steak after completing your prescribed dental implant programme, your treatment is free!

## For More Information

[www.painlessdentalimplants.co.uk](http://www.painlessdentalimplants.co.uk)

**Call 01732 807590**



# Blues guitarist Will Johns is set to perform at Astor Theatre

by Molly Kersey-Law

molly.kersy-law@archant.co.uk

**D**ISTINCTIVE blues guitarist and singer Will Johns will be performing in Deal during his tour of the UK.

The tour coincides with the release of his third album - Something Old, Something New, which comes out on April 15.

"I've tried to do something like it says on the tin," he explained.

"There's a track on there that's definitely a borrowed one, there's some songs from right at the beginning and then there's some new songs from over the last year or so."

Mr Johns has a strong musical background, teaching himself how to play the guitar when he was 15 years old.

His father is renowned record producer Andy Johns and his uncle is singer Eric Clapton, who is well-known for iconic hits such as Layla and Tears In Heaven.

Mr Johns said that his family members had had a positive influence on him.

"Growing up my parents, my mum especially, had a great tape



**MUSICAL:** Will Johns will be performing songs from his new album Something Old, Something New

collection," he said.

"I taught myself to play by putting on those tapes and playing guitar to those records. I definitely taught myself by ear."

And he was encouraged and supported by his influential uncle.

"It was really amazing," he said. "Especially during my first gig at school, when we were raising money for charity."

"All of a sudden this great big

Marshall amp appeared. It was one of his and he'd sent it over so that we could do the concert."

Mr Johns knew he wanted to pursue a career in music from a young age.

"I went to college in Oxford and did a performing arts course."

"I think I have always been a bit of a show off, I knew I wanted to perform one way or another."

He released his first solo album -

Count On Me - in 2008 and Hooks and Lines in 2012.

Mr Johns will be performing at the Astor Theatre on Thursday (March 24).

The show will start at 8pm and tickets are £15.

For further details or to book you can visit [www.theastor.org](http://www.theastor.org).

For more information about Mr Johns' music visit [www.willjohns.sdclients.net](http://www.willjohns.sdclients.net).

## Jazz trio due in Sevenoaks

JAZZ and swing trio Hot Club of Cowtown will perform at the Stag Community Arts Centre, Sevenoaks, on April 17.

The show starts at 7.30pm and tickets are £20.

Call 01732 450175 to book.



## Exposing the latest scams

JAMES Freedman will be bringing his show, Man of Steel, to the Theatre Royal Margate.

He will be exposing how criminals carry out scams and the ways to avoid them.

The performance will take place on June 30 at 7.30pm.

Call 01843 292795 to book.

## Hit musical in Dartford

MUSICAL Priscilla Queen of the Desert will be at the Orchard Theatre, Dartford, from April 25 to 30.

Performances will take place at 2.30pm and 7.30pm.

Call 01322 220000 to book.



## Mister Maker is on stage

CHILDREN'S TV star Phil Gallagher will be bringing his live stage show - Mister Maker and the Shapes - to the Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury, on April 8 and 9.

The show features songs and a big 'make' to join in with.

For details or to book call 01227 787787.





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## Abi Zakarian's production

ABI Zakarian's new play Fabric will be performed at the Theatre Royal Margate on July 2 at 7.30pm.

Tickets are £12 or £10 with concessions.  
Call 01843 292795 to book.



## Mix of theatre and a game

THE Money - described as a 'cross between a game and a theatrical performance' - will be at the Folkestone Quarterhouse on April 23.

Audience members can choose to become either a 'benefactor' or a 'silent witness'.

The show starts at 5pm.

Call 01303 760750 for more details.

## Hits of the 80s in show

SHOW 80s Mania will be making its way to the Orchard Theatre, Dartford, on May 6.

It features 25 songs from performers such as Kim Wilde, Madonna, and Madness.

Call 01322 220000 to book.



## Ramblin' Man Fair's acts

THREE more bands have been added to this year's Ramblin' Man Fair line-up.

Returning for its second year, the festival takes place in Mote Park from July 23 to 24.

Family, The Answer and Whiskey Myers are the latest acts to have been announced.

Visit [www.ramblinmanfair.com](http://www.ramblinmanfair.com) for details.

# Renowned magicians prepare to wow crowds

By Molly Kersey-Law

[molly.kersey-law@archant.co.uk](mailto:molly.kersey-law@archant.co.uk)

**F**IVE renowned illusionists will be taking to the stage in show Champions of Magic.

The production will be making its way to Tunbridge Wells. It features mind reader Alex McAleer, Edward Hislum, who will be using live doves in his act, Fay Presto and double act Young and Strange.

Young and Strange is made up of Richard Young and Sam Strange.

Speaking about the upcoming show, Mr Young explained: "We are bringing something very, very special to Kent. This magic show has a bit of everything."

"There's five magicians who are all very different and we all perform different types of magic."

"We do big, large scale stage illusions. We have a 10ft high industrial fan which spins at over 70mph, like a big jet turbine, and we attempt to walk through it when the blades are spinning at full speed, hopefully without being cut to shreds."



"There are some really thrilling, dangerous illusions."

The pair met at the age of eight and they have remained friends ever since.

"We have known each other since we were kids, we grew up together," said Mr Young.

"It's gone from one thing to another. We always had a real appetite for big and spectacular magic tricks like you see in Las Vegas," he added.

One of their tricks involves a cardboard box - one of them gets

inside and the other pushes sharp objects through it.

"We have been doing it since we were younger because we didn't have any money, and it's still in the show now," he said.

The performance will be taking place at the Assembly Hall Theatre on March 26.

Tickets are £21 for adults or £16.50 for children.

For more information or to book tickets to the show call the box office on 01892 530613 or visit [www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk](http://www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk).



**MAGIC:** Alex McAleer



**ILLUSIONS:** Edward Hislum uses live doves in his act



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# Jack Garratt isn't phase-d by criticism of gongs

The multi-instrumentalist has had a very busy schedule since he released his debut album Phase....

**M**ULTI-INSTRUMENTALIST and songwriter Jack Garratt's diary is the stuff of nightmares.

That's, of course, if the thing that keeps you up at night is the thought of hundreds of scheduled events, gigs and promotional activity for your recently released debut album, which in Mr Garratt's case, is called Phase.

It's so full-on right now, the 24-year-old has stopped looking at his calendar and relies on other people getting him where he needs to be. "I don't know what's happening from one day to the next, but at the moment, there's nothing that I don't like doing, and I trust everyone implicitly. I've had the same team

around me for the past four years, and they know if something is going to be good for me."

He added: "Talking to people and promoting my album is a huge part of my existence at the moment, and I do like that. Ultimately, I just try to avoid talking to people about my face."

It's not Mr Garratt's face people want to talk about, but the trend-setting prizes he's won in the run-up to the release of his debut album.

Last year he won the BRITs critics' choice award and a month or so later, it was revealed he had also topped the BBC's annual Sound Of poll. Increasingly in recent years, the prizes have come under fire for granting what looks like preordained success.

Mr Garratt, who is also signed to a



**MUSICAL:** Jack Garratt's album features many different genres

major record label, has something to say about such criticism.

"I've read some reviews, and they all go on about these awards, and the fact I'm signed to Island, but some writers appear to have done no research whatsoever," he says.

When he was 14, he entered a song he'd written into the Junior Eurovision Song Contest, and was selected to take part in the competition in Belgium. Things didn't quite go to plan, with his song The Girl finishing bottom in the eight-song contest.

Mr Garratt believes it kick-started his career and, as he believes he entered the contest for the attention rather than a love of music, made him focus on what was important. After that he recorded an album but with

the help of what he calls a "big break-up", re-evaluated his life plans and decided not to go to university to study teaching, but moved to London to pursue music instead.

That was four years ago, when Garratt started writing the music that makes up his debut album, which swishes from genre to genre, acoustic songwriter one minute, dubstep drops the next.

"People say I move around all over the place with genres, but I've never really thought about it like that," he says. "I just write the music that I like. I love pancakes, but I wouldn't want them to be the only thing I ate. So why stick to one style of music when there's so much to be explored?"

Phase is available to buy now.

## Error 404 in Margate

**DANIEL** Bye's play Error 404 will be performed at the Theatre Royal Margate on June 2 at 2pm.

It tells the story of a boy whose best friend died in a terrible accident.

When his mum brings home a parcel, things start to get a bit strange.

Tickets are £10 or £8 with concessions.

Visit [www.theatreroyal margate.com](http://www.theatreroyal margate.com) for more details or to book.

## The hits of the greats

**MUSICAL** show Magic of Motown will be performed at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley, on May 8.

The show features the hits of artists such as Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye, Dianna Ross and Lionel Richie.

The performance will be starting at 7.30pm.

For further information, or to book, visit [www.churchilltheatre.co.uk](http://www.churchilltheatre.co.uk).

## A festival for cyclists

**THE** Freewheel Pub and Cycling Cafe in Graveney will be holding a festival. The event will begin on March 26 at 9am with a bike jumble.

A number of cycling films, including documentary Bicycle, will be shown in the workshop from 7.30pm on March 26 and 27.

For more details or to book a pitch in the bike jumble, you can visit [www.thefreewheel.pub](http://www.thefreewheel.pub) or call 01795 538143.

## Young 'Uns on stage

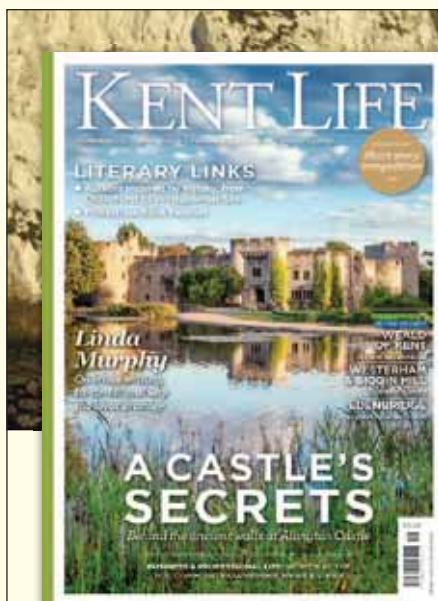
**AWARD-WINNING** folk band The Young 'Uns will be performing at the Marlowe Studio, Canterbury.

The band won best group at the BBC Radio Folk awards last year.

They will be performing their musical show - Three For All - on April 25.

The performance starts at 8pm. For more information or to book tickets to the show call the box office on 01227 787787.

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# Find Western Australia's treasure

## TRAVEL REVIEW: Australia

by Sarah Marshall

**L**ISTENING to calcified coral cracking underfoot, I can almost hear the fragile cries of lost souls buried metres below me.

Nearly four centuries ago, 126 men, women and children were massacred during one of the most blood-thirsty episodes in Australia's maritime history, and many of their bodies were laid to rest here, on Beacon Island.

A local fisherman, Chook, tells me he once spent the night on this "island of angry ghosts", awaking to the sound of panic-stricken, squawking seabirds.

For now, the windswept, barren coral mound is calm, although a fringe of blood-red fish spawn along the shoreline unintentionally nods to a sinister past.

It's not an obvious sightseeing attraction, or even one that's easy to reach, but I'm visiting as part of a small cruise through the relatively unknown Abrolhos Islands.

This archipelago of 122 coral and limestone islands strung along the world's most southerly reef system, 60km offshore from west coast town Geraldton, welcomes only a handful of tourists each year, yet it occupies an important place in Australia's history.

In 1629, the Dutch merchant vessel Batavia shipwrecked after hitting Morning Reef, which sailors had mistaken for "moonshine on the water".

Of the 322 passengers on board, most managed to swim to shore, although a mutiny reminiscent of Lord Of The Flies ensued.

Hero Wiebbe Hayes eventually reclaimed peace, and the stone forts he erected on West Wallabi Island are considered to be the first European



**CRUISE:** The Abrolhos Islands in Western Australia

buildings on Australian soil.

Providing tidal conditions are favourable, tourists can snorkel or dive the Batavia shipwreck, although up until recently, it's only been possible to reach with expensive charters or by hitching a ride with a fisherman.

A crayfishing industry developed here in the 1920s, with settlements springing up over the course of subsequent decades.

But communities collapsed when a

quota system was introduced in 2010, meaning it was no longer feasible to fish for more than a few months a year.

Jay Cox, 54, lived on Rat Island for 14 years with his wife, Sonia, and their children.

He's since swapped crayfishing for tourism, and purchased the Eco Abrolhos six years ago, after seeing it for sale in a magazine.

The 38-passenger ship, which for-

merly operated in the Whitsundays, becomes my cosy home for the next five days. I'm joined on board by a group of 15 hardy, nature-loving Australians, mainly retirees escaping the east coast winter on long caravanning trips.

During our bumpy four-hour sailing from Geraldton, I hear about a 70-year-old vet's attempts to reintroduce a rare breed of pheasant to New South Wales, and learn how one cou-

## TRAVEL FACTS

SARAH Marshall was a guest of Western Australia.

You can visit [www.westernaustralia.com](http://www.westernaustralia.com) for further details.

A five-day cruise with Eco Abrolhos costs £1,135 per person including food and tours.

A three-day cruise is £681. For more information you can, visit [www.ecoabrolhos.com.au](http://www.ecoabrolhos.com.au).

ple manage to survive for six months a year camping on a beach with just a couple of fishing rods and a biodegradable toilet.

All the while, I'm distracted by migratory humpbacks breaching on the horizon.

Lying in the stream of the Leeuwin Current, the Abrolhos Islands are surrounded by a mixture of tropical and temperate waters making conditions extremely favourable for marine wildlife and a healthy coral reef.

Belts of turquoise and indigo wrap around the islands, melting into each other like butter in a pan.

Using the gentle current to carry me, I drift snorkel off the shores of Wooded Island, admiring some of the 100 different types of coral found here. Clownfish eyeball me suspiciously from beneath the writhing tendrils of blue-tipped anemones, as I float below a rooftop of large plate corals. Those who prefer not to get wet take a scenic trip in glass bottom boat, the King Diver, while others fish for squid.

That evening, Chook and Jay's son, Bronson, fillet snapper and coral trout for dinner as the watery silhouettes of salivating reef sharks gather around the boat.

## Film Reviews by Damon Smith



### 10 CLOVERFIELD LANE (15, 103 mins) Thriller

TWO'S company, three's a paranoia-riddled crowd in 10 Cloverfield Lane, a thrilling companion piece to the 2008 found footage sci-fi Cloverfield, which witnessed an otherworldly attack on New York City through the lens

of a resident's camcorder.

The monsters in Dan Trachtenberg's suffocating three-hander are distinctly human but no less terrifying, driven to acts of violence and barbarity in the name of self-preservation.

"People are strange creatures. You can't always convince them that safety is in their best interest," pointedly muses one of the protagonists.

Josh Campbell, Matt Stuecken and Damien Chazelle's deliciously ambiguous script keeps us guessing about where that safety might be, constantly shifting the balance of power between characters whose ulterior motives are shrouded in mystery.

Every time we think we have a grasp on the slippery narrative, the film pulls another rug from under us, flinging us into a mire of nerve-jangling confusion.

The less you know about

Trachtenberg's picture before the lights dim, the better.

In an affectionate nod to Hitchcock's Psycho, the director cranks up the tension with opening shots of a young woman, Michelle, driving away from her old life in the city.

She stops for petrol and takes a pleading telephone call from her boyfriend Ben shortly before her car spins out of control and plummets down a bank.

She regains consciousness in an underground bunker, at the mercy of a survivalist called Howard Stambler.

As she regains her strength, Michelle learns that Howard saved her and his neighbour Emmett shortly before a devastating global attack rendered the surface of the Earth uninhabitable.

The trio are safely cocooned within an airtight bunker, 40 feet below the polluted surface without any telephone signal, until the air is



breathable again.

The survivors have water, food and electricity thanks to Howard's ingenuity and immaculate forward planning, and make the best of a hellish situation.

However, Michelle isn't sure if she can trust everything that Howard tells her.

10 Cloverfield Lane is a polished masterclass in suggestion that

sends chills down the spine with unsettling regularity.

John Goodman is genuinely creepy as the conspiracy theorist who doesn't tolerate defiance of his rules in his underground lair. Mary Elizabeth Winstead, and John Gallagher Jr are equally strong as discombobulated house guests, who harbour secrets that could destroy them or set them free.



**T**HE Easter holidays are upon us and there's no better time than spring to engage the kids with gardening projects, or take them to outdoor places which will both inspire and delight them.

It's surely time to redress the balance of children's lack of connection with nature. Some 12 per cent of children in England have not visited a park, forest, garden or any other natural environment for at least 12 months, according to a new Government study.

Visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk) to have a look at Easter events taking place with the National Trust, whether it's an Easter egg hunt, crafts, cookery or bushcraft skills.

Four RHS gardens will also be holding a range of events, from Lindt Gold Bunny hunts and spring 'I-Spy' – a journey around the garden looking for spring plants, animals and equipment – to themed storytelling and birds of prey displays.

Visit [www.rhs.org.uk](http://www.rhs.org.uk) for details. But you can also sort out simple projects in your own garden, says Matthew Appleby, deputy editor at Horticulture Week, author, garden blogger and father-of-two, who is concerned that children are losing touch with nature.

"I see a 'disconnect' between children and nature – largely due to the rise of the internet," he says.

"A poll by Persil found that more than half of parents encourage their children to avoid messy activities



**CREATIVE:** There are a number of ways to get children involved with nature

# Spring gardening is child's play

such as gardening and baking. One in three children say that they did not like getting dirty, their preferred activities being television-watching and playing on video games."

Some companies have made inroads into tempting youngsters into the garden with their child-friendly products.

Seed Pantry, for instance, has

launched a new Children's Me Seeds Starter Kit, containing seeds to grow cress, sunflowers, pumpkins and sweetcorn, as well as all the compost discs, pots and labels you need to get started.

The starter kits are priced at £12.50 and they are available to buy from [www.seedpantry.co.uk](http://www.seedpantry.co.uk).

Attractive children's tools and

clothing have also made their mark, with companies such as Briers providing everything children might need for their garden adventures.

For more information you can visit them at [www.briersltd.co.uk](http://www.briersltd.co.uk).

There's also plenty of ideas for children's projects in Appleby's latest book, *The Children's Garden*.

These include creating a miniature

garden using an old washing up bowl or litter tray with some drainage holes in the bottom.

Children can use their own toys such as dolls, dinosaurs or fairies, to give them a sense of ownership.

*The Children's Garden: Loads Of Things to Make & Grow* by Matthew Appleby, is published by Frances Lincoln, priced £14.99.

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## Send car haters to garden city

READING your article on the new Ebbsfleet Garden City [KOS 06.03] being an 'active transport' city was interesting.

Let us hope that developers and councillors prove that they have the courage of their convictions and only build cycle paths and ban any vehicular road access.

This is what all government, county as well as local council planning documents promote, in other words, 'walking and cycling' and demonising anybody that chooses to drive.

The really great thing about this is that all those anti-car zealots that constantly bombard this paper and the rest of the media with their rhetoric, can now, shut-up and go and live there!

This will include, MPs, councillors, anti-car groups masquerading as charities like Roadpeace, Brake, 20's Plenty etc and numerous taxpayer funded cycling groups. They can all go and live in this cycling/public transport nirvana that they think is so wonderful.

This will leave the rest of us non-Nimby pro drivers, to use roads without further hindrance, of endless traffic calming, Edwardian speed limits, have more parking provision and all the other things they insist upon and use the roads for what they were made for, in other words the transport of goods and people.

**Terry Hudson,**  
Whitstable

## Brexit backers not distorting

SO, according to Martin Roche of Canterbury, it's the so called 'EU quitters' who are 'happy to fabricate and distort' and in an endeavour to bolster his threadbare argument, he uses the fact that Boris Johnson said the chief executive of the British Chamber of Commerce had been suspended and gagged because of his views.

Whether or not Boris Johnson was right or wrong in his assertion, he was expressing what he believed to be the case.

He didn't 'fabricate' or 'distort' anything.

It is not the 'leave group' that is engaging in the utterly negative 'project fear'.

Hardly a day has gone by so far without someone from the 'remain outfit' coming up with yet another 'Doomsday scenario' that they

## LETTER OF THE WEEK



## KCC needs to move over for unitaries

THANET Greens welcome the emerging debate about the future of Kent County Council [KOS 06.03].

In collaboration with community organisations, residents and business groups, and other political parties, we will play a full and active role in developing ideas for a new system of government in Kent which might ultimately replace KCC.

For many years, we have argued that KCC is too large and unwieldy and lacks any real connection and accountability to the people it serves. We believe that local government should, by definition, be based as close to its electors as possible.

This is why we think it's sensible for Thanet District Council to join with Dover, or Canterbury, to create a unitary authority serving a population of between 250,000 – 300,000 people; rather than setting up an east Kent super council

comprising Shepway, Dover, Thanet and Canterbury councils covering a population of over half a million people, as favoured by Roger Gale MP and the Tories.

A mega-council on this scale would be just as inaccessible, out of touch and unwieldy as KCC.

We believe if there is to be a fundamental restructuring of local government in Kent, the new councils which are created by this process should be elected on the basis of proportional representation ensuring that everybody's vote really counts.

We also believe that the voting age for these new councils should be reduced to 16 and that the new councils are run by cross-party committee systems rather than the undemocratic cabinet system in which a tiny handful of political bosses from the same party make all the decisions.

**Tricia Hartley and Ian Driver,**  
Thanet Greens

## Leadership is not way to EU

DR Brian Beeley thinks we should lead from inside the EU? (KOS, last week).

Seeing as we've lost most of the votes we've had an interest in and David Cameron had to ask permission of 27 other countries for the minor changes he requested, leading from inside is obviously not an option. Some clout, some influence, some sway!

As for using our muscle, have you seen the weak, spineless,

surrender monkeys in Westminster?

Regaining our fishing rights, the control of our courts, the control of immigration and all the other necessities for a sovereign, self governing and democratic nation, are just not up either for discussion by the EU, or for any change.

The City of London is under threat as a result of the Lisbon Treaty, suffering harmful and unsympathetic regulatory interventions from the EU, determined by qualified majority voting in the EU council and the UK has no veto. So dream on Dr Beeley, we want our country back before the EU dead hand ruins us too.

**Phil Granger,**  
West Malling

## Why does UK back herbicide?

LAST week, the European Union postponed the re-authorisation of the controversial toxic substance glyphosate, the world's most widely used herbicide.

However, this does more than just kill weeds. The World Health Organisation confirmed last year that glyphosate is "probably carcinogenic" to humans.

The postponement followed growing rebellion from EU governments. Italy, France, Sweden, and the Netherlands all opposed a new 15-year licence at a meeting which the European Commission had hoped would rubber stamp re-approval.

You will note the absence of the UK from this list. In fact, the UK government is a keen supporter of corporate agribusiness and has been leading the charge for deregulation, for which read; reduction of standards that protect public health.

Indeed former environment secretary, Owen Paterson, was a cheerleader for GM crops.

Glyphosate and GM are two sides of the same corporate coin.

Agribusiness giant Monsanto produces both Roundup, the world's leading glyphosate weed killer, and glyphosate-resistant GM crops. A marriage of convenience which enables corporate control of food production.

The blocking of re-authorisation of glyphosate is another example of why we are greener in the EU.

As a member of the Green Party, as a group we see the EU as the place where we can battle corporate power most effectively. But as is patently clear, this is something we can only hope to do while the UK remains a member of the EU.

**Keith Taylor,**  
MEP south east England

## KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles

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- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
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- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.

- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to

people living in the county.

9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.

10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

**We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.**





## Guildhall, Faversham

by **Alan Blackburn**

### WIN GREAT TICKETS EVERY MONTH!

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**NEW VOLVO S90:**  
Builds on the success  
and the technology  
of the latest XC90

## Volvo back in the big time?

**PREVIEW:** No turrets adorn the new S90 as Volvo aims to reclaim a once lofty status in the big car sector...

**V**OLVO used to do well with big cars, though robust styling often drew unflattering comparisons with trucks, or comments like "it just needs a gun turret on top."

The Swedish marque's designs may have shaped up better more recently, but it has still suffered from the down-sizing trend that has trimmed the whole big car sector.

Volvo's outgoing S80 saloon – worthy, though it was – also struggled for cachet and driver engagement versus German rivals.

But BMW and Co may not have it easy once the Swedes' S90 replacement and equivalent estate arrives.

They will benefit from developments financed by the brand's wealthy Chinese owner, Geely, and already invested in Volvo's excellent new XC90 SUV: they'll be lighter, stiffer, and more spacious, eco-friendly and tax efficient.

The low slung S90 also looks superb, and will gain the 'Twin Engine' petrol-electric plug-in hybrid tech from the XC90, with an estimated all-electric range of around 30 miles and claimed official fuel economy of more than 100mpg.

As with the XC90 hybrid, this won't come cheap, but no S90 will be a snip anyway; rather than looking for big volumes, the word from Volvo HQ is how the S90 series will be pitched higher than the S80 (from £32,500), hunting



discerning buyers attracted by technological prowess, Volvo's traditional emphasis on safety, and more of the classy Scandinavian cabin that is a latter day brand hallmark.

Volvo also seems to have created the in-car touchscreen of the moment: first seen on the XC90, this might well be the motoring equiva-

lent of the iPad, with a big display and intuitive operation – a sharp contrast to so many on the market at present.

And it could just give Volvo an edge, especially with all-new BMW 5 Series and Mercedes-Benz E-Class rivals also arriving this year.



# Mark 2 XF big cat 'leaps' ahead...

**ROAD TEST:** Jaguar's new version of the car that sparked the brand's revival is a well-judged evolution – both driver and tax-friendly...

**J**AGUAR'S pouncing bonnet emblem – known affectionately as The Leaper – is the British sporting brand's hallmark.

And Jaguar itself took a huge leap forward with the original 2008-vintage XF saloon, even if The Leaper itself went backwards – to the bootlid.

Its style ditched the tired old 'trad Jag' looks of the marque's heyday – notably the twin-headlamp motif of the original XJ series – and Jaguar's line-up has since revitalised and expanded.

Even at the first XF's demise last year it still looked right, with its four-door coupe-style helping to inspire many similarly rakish coupe/saloons.

Not surprisingly then, a resurgent Jaguar has evolved rather than revolutionised the XF's style – the approach usually taken by German premium rivals anyway.

The second generation car (from £32,300) simply looks slicker and smarter than before, with a new aluminium-intensive body, claimed to be at least 80kg – roughly equivalent to the average UK male adult – lighter than the competition.

Its most frugal variant also has the



lowest CO2 emissions of any non-hybrid rival (104g/km), with an impressive 70.6mpg official combined fuel economy, helped by exceptional aerodynamics; its Cd 0.26 drag co-efficient being on par with the snorting Nissan GT-R street racer and BMW's ultra-green i8 supercar – not bad for a relatively

affordable exec saloon.

Jaguar has also blitzed the only consistent beef about the old XF: cramped rear legroom for its size. Now it's the sector leader for rear leg and headroom; there's also generous width for three across the back, though the middle passenger will find his/her feet splayed by the floor tunnel.



The driver is now faced by an all-new 10.2-inch touchscreen for an intuitive infotainment system at the centre of one of the best-arranged cabins in class.

However, it is a drabber place this time, with Jaguar seemingly influenced by unimaginative German rivals, rather than seeking a

## Jaguar XF R-Sport 2.0i 163PS Manual

Price:	from £34,200
Driving appeal:	★★★★
Image:	★★★★
Space:	★★★★
Value:	★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Best rival:	BMW 5 Series

point of difference.

There's not much doubt of a lead on the road though: the XF is probably the finest mix of handling and comfort in its class and would be a worthy upholder of Jag's famous 'Grace, Pace and Space' slogan this time around were it not for the unedifying noise of the 163PS (161bhp) diesel fitted to the test car: it's the lower output option of the impressively economical and tax-beating all-new 2.0-litre oil burners offered in the XF, but mars the experience delivered by the nicely judged chassis and overall lightness of the car.

And the auto 'box might be preferable to the test car's manual unit, which was overly light to use, to the point where I worried at the ease with which reverse might be engaged rather than first – more exacting selection is needed.

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MPG figures are official EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. \*Official fuel figures for the Isuzu Yukon Manual in mpg (l/100km): Urban 31.7 (8.9), Extra Urban 44.1 (6.4), Combined 38.7 (7.3). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 192g/km. For model specific figures please contact us directly or visit [www.isuzu.co.uk](http://www.isuzu.co.uk)

<sup>†</sup>Price shown is an Isuzu Yukon Extended Cab CVOTR with manual transmission, automatic transmission also available from £21,499 CVOTR. Commercial vehicle on the road price includes delivery, number plates, 12 months road fund licence and first registration fee, excludes VAT. \*5 year/125,000 miles (whichever comes first) warranty applies to all new Isuzu D-Max models. Special paint finishes extra at £400 excluding VAT. Finance options available at participating dealers, subject to status. Terms and conditions apply. [www.isuzu.co.uk](http://www.isuzu.co.uk)



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Official Government fuel consumption figures (Range): Urban cycle, Extra urban, Combined (litres per 100km/mpg) & CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km); Highest: Citroën C3 PureTech 82 manual Selection 5.6/50.4, 4.1/68.9, 4.6/61.4, 107. Lowest: Citroën C3 BlueHDi 100 manual Exclusive 3.8/74.3, 3.2/88.3, 3.4/83.1, 87. MPG figures are achieved under official EU test conditions, intended as a guide for comparative purposes only, and may not reflect actual on-the-road driving conditions.

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Over 40s only  
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## 60s Party Breaks

Stoke Rochford Hall, Lincs

30 Apr, 14 Oct, 4 Nov, 2016

Quote: SR-KOS

Join us for a 60s-themed private party break, at Stoke Rochford Hall in the heart of rural Lincolnshire near Grantham. This historic Victorian mansion is set in 28 acres of landscaped parkland with accommodation in the Stable Courtyard and Woodland Lodge annexe and entertainment in The Venue - for over 40s only, all located in the grounds. Enjoy a 60s tribute act both nights and access to the leisure club's gym, heated pool, sauna and steam room.

**INCLUDED:** Entertainment • 2 dinners & 2 breakfasts • Free use of leisure facilities • 2 nights sharing an en-suite bedroom with TV & tea/coffee tray • Free Parking



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Over 40s only  
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## 60s Party Break

Penyard House, Wye Valley

Friday, 3 June, 2016

Quote: PH-KOS

Join us for a 60s-themed private party break, for over 40s only, at Penyard House Hotel in the tranquil Herefordshire countryside near Ross on Wye. Set in 9 acres of beautiful gardens and pasture this 18th century house has undergone careful refurbishment and expansion over the years. Enjoy a 60s tribute act both nights, breakfasts and dinners, and a host of attractions nearby.

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Entertainment  
Over 40s only  
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## 60s Party Break

4 Star Hinckley Island Hotel  
Leicestershire

Friday, 17 June, 2016 - Quote HK6-KOS

Join us for a private party break featuring 60s bands The Fortunes and The Ivy League at the 4 star Hinckley Island Hotel nestled in the heart of Leicestershire near Nuneaton and Market Bosworth. Relax in the hotel's indoor pool and fitness suite, the Triumph Sports bar and Piazza Lounge Bar or venture out to nearby attractions, before dinner and fun-packed evening both nights.

**INCLUDED:** Entertainment - live band each night • 2 dinners and 2 breakfasts • Free use of leisure facilities • 2 nights sharing an en-suite bedroom with TV, tea/coffee tray and free wifi • Free Parking



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Free Drinks  
Entertainment  
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## Mamma Mia & Super 70s Party

Pontins Pakefield, Suffolk

Friday, 8 July, 2016

Quote: SS7-KOS

Join us at Pontins Pakefield, on the Suffolk coast, for a Super Summer Private Party - for over 40s only. Our fun-packed weekend features 70s chart toppers Showaddywaddy, a screening of Mamma Mia the movie plus Abba and Rod Stewart tributes. Entertainment is virtually non-stop from Friday to Sunday evening and you'll also enjoy free drinks every night.

**INCLUDED:** 3 Free drinks per person per night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers • Entertainment • 3 nights en-suite chalet accommodation - club upgrade available • 3 dinners & 3 breakfasts • Free Parking



3 nights  
half board  
PLUS  
£129<sup>pp</sup>

Free Drinks  
Entertainment  
Over 40s only  
£10pp deposit

## Ultimate 60s Christmas Party

Pontins Pakefield, Suffolk

Friday, 8 November, 2016

Quote: XP11-KOS

Join us on the Suffolk coast for a Fab Private Party - for over 40s only - to get you in the mood for Christmas. Enjoy plenty of festive fun, free drinks every night and non-stop entertainment from Friday to Sunday evening. This year's line-up includes: The Searchers, Union Gap, The New Honeycombs, The Cufflinks plus a tribute to Dusty Springfield.

**INCLUDED:** 3 Free drinks per person per night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers • Entertainment • 3 nights en-suite chalet accommodation - club upgrade available • 3 dinners & 3 breakfasts • Free Parking



3 nights  
half board  
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£249<sup>pp</sup>

Free Drinks  
Entertainment  
Over 40s only  
£10pp deposit

## Super 60s Premium Christmas Party at Warner Norton Grange, Isle of Wight

Friday 25 Nov, 2016 - Quote: NG11-KOS

Great Entertainment, a fab festive atmosphere, free drinks, good food, free car ferry and a super location make Warner's Norton Grange resort, on the Isle of Wight, our most popular over 40s Christmas Party venue. We've booked the whole resort again for an exclusive celebration with a super entertainment featuring 60s band Union Gap, Roy Carter of Heatwave, a Rod Stewart tribute and more.

**INCLUDED:** Free drinks from 6pm to midnight every night - house beers and spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks and mixers • Entertainment • 3 nights standard en-suite chalet - upgrades available • 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners • Return car ferry

Private Events - You cannot book these self-drive breaks direct with the hotels/resorts

# main dealer servicing

A buyer's  
guide....

## FMDSH – it's short for peace of mind

**P**RICES don't seem to come down, yet cars represent better value now than ever before thanks to better quality, comfort, economy, specification and reliability.

But owners still need to keep up the service schedule and ensure repairs are carried out swiftly and competently.

The best guarantee used to be a full main dealer service history (FMDSH), a reassuring record that everything required for the manufacturer's warranty had been carried out. But this became seen as a restrictive practice, so 2002 EU legislation stopped manufacturers insisting on cars being maintained by their franchise network to keep the guarantee intact.

Nevertheless, many car-buyers still think main dealer franchising is the best way to protect the part-exchange or secondhand value of the car, since used-car-buyers will usually pay a premium for a full main dealer service history on sophisticated models. But sceptics argue that this perceived premium is wiped out by higher main dealer service bills. Maybe, but manufacturers and their dealer networks have raised their game since the 2002



legislation. Indeed, with car sales and profits squeezed, dealers have become more competitive on servicing, created cost-effective service plans, enhanced customer service, and specialised in ancillaries like tyres and exhausts – normally the preserve of the quick-fits.

They have also banked on the perception that only a main dealer's service technicians can know its cars as well they do.

And happy service customers keep coming back, seeing the latest new models in the car showroom – they may soon buy again.



**THE MAIN DEALER TECHNICIAN:** best for your new Renault Kadjar crossover or Hyundai i10 city car?



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\*Clio monthly payment based on £2,207 deposit, 24 monthly payments of £159, optional final payment of £6,153. Captur monthly payment based on £1,504 deposit, 24 monthly payments of £199, optional final payment of £8,715. Finance provided by Renault Finance, PO Box 149, Watford WD17 1FJ. Subject to status. Indemnities may be required. UK residents only (excluding the Channel Islands). Over 18s. Terms and conditions apply. Offer based on 6,000 miles per annum, excess mileage 8p per mile inc VAT. Finance available on selected new vehicles when ordered between 12 February and 31 March 2016 and registered by 30 June 2016. Excludes Renaultsport and Expression models. \*\*Offer for £500 cashback towards your fuel (including VAT) has been extended and is available to retail customers only on new Clio and Captur models when ordered and registered between 15 and 31 March 2016. Clio shown has optional i.d. metallic paint, at an extra £595. Captur shown with metallic i.d. paint, and painted roof at an extra £894.

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# Dealers hit back at their quick-fit rivals

**S**PECIALIST 'quick/fast-fit' centres boomed as motorists tried to save money and time on new exhausts, tyres, batteries, clutches, shock-absorbers, plus routine services and the annual MOT.

But main dealers did not sit idle, reckoning that car owners using their service bays might be open to a 'one-stop shop' option with realistic deals on tyres and exhausts, for instance.

Using the main dealer also guarantees genuine manufacturers' parts are used, adding confidence of additional quality, durability and knowledge that this will be logged on the manufacturer database.

Owners have been similarly encouraged for bodyshop repairs by the franchise's own panel-beaters and paintshop or one that gets its seal of approval.

Main dealers have also borrowed from quick-fit rivals by offering menu pricing; like dining out, a customer can decide what he wants and knows in advance what it will

cost – avoiding motoring indigestion when the bill is presented.

Some dealers even offer to spread the cost via finance or servicing schemes over several years.

Others may also offer a loyalty scheme offering cheaper prices to keep owners of older and lower-value models on their books, rather than see them defect to the non-franchised sector simply because they feel their car is no longer worth top servicing prices.

Another borrowed quick-fit trick is longer working hours at main dealer service centres: many customers want to drop off their car early on their way to work and then pick it up at the end of the day – a courtesy car may even be offered.

Bookings can often be made centrally, too, so that customers living midway between two franchised dealers within the same group can pick the most convenient service slots available.



**QUICK FIT VS MAIN DEALER:** which is best for your new Citroen C4 Cactus crossover or superminis like the Renault Clio and Hyundai i20?



**KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY:** that's what experts say about caring for your new DS3 supermini, Hyundai Tucson SUV or Renault Captur crossover



## What the experts say...

THIRD party sources support keeping your new car in the franchise family.

Media motoring guru Honest John really was honest with a BMW owner who considered an independent garage to maintain his car: "After independent servicing, you will get a lower part-ex price from a BMW dealer and it will go to auction."

"If the car has a full dealer service

history and is in retail condition, you will get a higher price.

The difference will normally be worth more than you save on maintenance."

Motor Trade Insider website polled



some professional motor-traders who collectively buy 5,000 cars per year for main dealers:

"If you were

asked to bid on a three-year-old variant of one of your models with average mileage and spec, would you value it any less if it had three KwikFit/ Halfords/Tesco etc stamps against three stamps from the franchise representing the car?"

The answer: "The results in some cases were staggering: the Ford and



VW-buyers said they would value a car like this £800-£1,000 less.

"The Jaguar-buyer said it would need to be £1,500 to £2,000 less - the BMW and Mercedes boys said they probably just wouldn't want to buy it!"



# Kent Hyundai



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**LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES**

**LICENSING ACT 2003:**

**Public Notice of Application for Grant/  
Variation of a Premises Licence  
Premises Licence**

Application has today been made to the Council for the above licence by: Andrew Barnes and Mary Barnes of The Royal Function Rooms, 12 Star Hill, Rochester, Kent ME1 1XD for an increase in authorised hours for the sale by retail of alcohol from 10.00 to 02.00 and the provision of regulated entertainment, namely plays, live and recorded music, performance of dance and facilities for dancing on various days at various times, indoor sporting events, wrestling and boxing events, showing of films. Proposed hours: 09.00-02.30 with seasonal variations of operation.

DPS: Andrew Barnes Dated 11th March 2016  
Representations should be made in writing within 28 days of the above date to: the Licensing Unit, Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR.

Should you wish to make representations to the Council it must be in writing and/or you can view our application by contacting the Council on 01634 337107 or 337108 by 8th April 2016.

It is an offence to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in connection with an application which carries a maximum fine of £5000.

**Goods Vehicle  
Operator's Licence**

Triple Nine Transport Ltd of Unit Z, Transfesa Road, Paddock wood Distribution Centre, Paddock Wood, Kent TN12 6UU is applying to change an existing license as follows; To keep 14 units and 11 trailers at the operating centre Forstall House, Maidstone Road, Paddock Wood TN12 PY.

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representatives must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

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# Testimonial for Dartford winger

Ryan Hayes is to be recognised for his 11 years of service...

## Football

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

DARTFORD have announced that long-serving winger Ryan Hayes will have a testimonial match at Princes Park this summer.

It was confirmed late this week that local rivals Ebbsfleet United will be the opponents, to face a Ryan Hayes XI side hand-picked by the player himself.

Hayes, who is now 30, joined the club towards the end of the 2004/05 season from Kent League side Slade Green FC, established himself as a fans' favourite, and has since gone on to make almost 500 appearances for the Darts.

He said: "I'm delighted and think it's a great honour to be granted the testimonial year with Dartford.

"I'm looking forward to all the events that my committee are going to organise, but especially the match.

"The players I'm inviting will make the day a good one I'm sure – and I hope the fans turn out in their numbers to help me celebrate my playing career and time at the club so far."

Hayes has made a total of 474 appearances for the club, and has scored 89 goals, making him the club's eighth highest scorer, and his honours include winners medals in the Kent Senior Cup and Conference South play-offs.

The club remained coy on some further details with regards to who may line up alongside Hayes.

Chairman Steve Irving paid tribute to the popular winger, saying: "It's great news for Ryan and great



**HONOURED:** A Ryan Hayes XI will take on Ebbsfleet United in July

news for the club, too. I've watched him develop over those 11 years since he announced his arrival with two goals on his debut.

"And as I've said before he's thrilled and frustrated fans in equal measure but it's lovely to be able to recognise him like this.

"Ebbsfleet are one of our greatest and oldest rivals and when we played them in the league we had a huge attendance, so hopefully we'll see similar crowds turn out."

Ryan Hayes' testimonial match will take place at Princes Park on Sunday, July 17.

## Maidstone midfielder Flisher signs new deal

## Football

ALEX Flisher has signed a new contract with Maidstone United, keeping him at the club until the summer of 2018.

The midfielder, 23, has made more than 200 appearances for the club, scoring more than 50 goals in the process, but has been plagued by injury since making his debut in November 2011.

First contracted by Jay Saunders in his first full season as Stones boss, this is the fifth occasion that the Maidstone-born midfielder has been offered new terms.

He told the club's website: "Being my local club it was an easy decision to make, especially with it being for two years.



**HOME:** Gallagher Stadium

"After my injury, some clubs might not give you that opportunity but it's good that Jay and the club have.

"I always looks back and say six years ago we were playing in Ryman South in front of 250 people and now we're playing in front of 2,000.

"It's a big difference from when I first started and each season the club are progressing, so who knows where we'll be in two years.

"The fans have always been great to me: the response I get from them – whether I start or come on – is good, and to hear your name sung is pretty special."

Stones boss Saunders added: "I am pleased to get this deal done.

"Flish has been an important part of what we've achieved at the club over the past few years.

"It's good to see him getting back to his full fitness and I am hopeful that he'll play a big part in the business end of the season."

## Sport Shorts

» Email [sports@kosmedia.co.uk](mailto:sports@kosmedia.co.uk) or call Tom Pyman on 01233653477

## Oshilaja rejoins Gills on loan from Cardiff

GILLINGHAM have re-signed defender Deji Oshilaja on loan from Cardiff City in a deal that runs until the end of the season.

The 23-year-old made 15 appearances in all competitions for the Gills earlier in the campaign during his first loan spell, which ended on January 3.

Manager Justin Edinburgh was hopeful of bringing Oshilaja back to Priestfield last month, before injuries and suspensions at the Championship side led to him being required for first team duties by his parent club.

However, recent injuries to John Egan and Bristol City loanee Adam El-Abd have resulted in the two sides negotiating and confirming this new deal.

Oshilaja told the club's website: "I'm happy to be back, the lads have kept the team in a good position in the league, and hopefully we can really kick on.

"It was great to see the lads again."

The loan can be extended to cover the League One play-off fixtures should the Gills be involved.



**BOSS:** Justin Edinburgh



**PROMISING:** Esmee Hawkey

## Teenage GT sensation in Porsche team up

PROMISING teenage GT driver Esmee Hawkey has teamed up with Porsche ahead of this year's programme.

Hawkey, 18, from Chislehurst, will be among the first in the country to race the highly anticipated Porsche Cayman GT4 Club Sport.

She will be competing in the GT Cup Championship as the youngest female Porsche GT driver in the UK

on a calendar that includes races on three Grand Prix circuits.

Hawkey told Kent on Sunday: "This is a new chapter in my racing career and I'm very keen to get started.

"Porsche is a fantastic brand to work with so I'm really happy to have partnered up with Porsche Centre Tonbridge for the next step of my racing journey."

## Powerlifter Tom eyes nationals

AN ASHFORD powerlifter is looking to follow in his father's footsteps and compete in a series of national events.

Tom Calnan, 22, is only at the start of his journey but aspires to compete in the Great Britain Powerlifting Federation (GBPF) Championships.

He began his bid to become a British powerlifting champion last

November and has been drawing on the coaching experience of father and coach Darran who was a successful powerlifter in his youth.

He entered his first competition in February in a junior novice event and will now take part in the GBPF South East in April, where he aims to beat the South East and British bench press record and qualify for the Kent and Surrey Championships.

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